DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 440 286 CE 080 056

AUTHOR	Hughes, Katherine
TITLE	Changing Directions: A Critical Look at the Future of Work and Unemployment. A Pack of Flexible and Immediately Usable Interaction Materials Offering a Wide Curriculum, for Use with Adults Concerned To Better Understand Changes in Society and To Make Positive Changes in Their Own Lives.
INSTITUTION	National Inst. of Adult Continuing Education, Leicester (England).
REPORT NO	ISBN-1-86201-059-5
PUB DATE	2000-00-00
NOTE	178p.; With David Hitchcock, Carol Lushington, Ann Schofield, and Tom Sherry.
AVAILABLE FROM	National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, 21 De Montfort Street, Leicester LE11 7GE, United Kingdom (40 pounds). Web site: http://www.niace.org.uk.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Learner (051) -- Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; Adult Learning; Behavioral Objectives; Career Change; Communication Skills; Democracy; *Economic Change; *Education Work Relationship; *Educational Needs; Educational Opportunities; Employment Interviews; *Employment Patterns; Financial Support; Foreign Countries; Income; Information Sources; Job Application; Job Search Methods; Job Training; *Labor Education; Labor Market; Learning Activities; Lifelong Learning; Mathematics Skills; Numeracy; Percentage; Records (Forms); Social Change; Statistics; Student Financial Aid; Tables (Data); Time Management; Trend Analysis; *Unemployment; Writing (Composition)
IDENTIFIERS	*Great Britain

ABSTRACT

This document, which is directed primarily at groups working with people who are unemployed, partly employed, or out of the workforce, contains materials for a course titled "Changing Directions" that is designed to help people make sense of contemporary changes in society and work while considering various ways to channel their creativity and social involvement. The materials are organized into seven units containing some or all of the following: introduction; fact sheets; discussion questions; learning activities; quizzes; and reference lists. The chapter titles are as follows: "The Future of Work"; "Unemployment"; "Communications and Democracy"; "Facing the Figures"; "Culture Is Ordinary"; "Identity and Resistance"; and "Challenging and Changing." The chapters on culture aim to sharpen awareness of language, open doors to new interests, value talents and interests already developed, and offer other forms of critiquing social processes. Appended are information sheets devoted to the following topics: finding jobs; job applications; preparing for interviews; training, retraining, and education; paying for education and training; sources of information; 20 alternative ways of spending time usefully; content of the course "Changing Directions"; example program; benefits participants have derived from the course; and useful addresses. (MN)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 440 286

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE,
AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC
COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY,
HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D. Man

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
2A

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Changing Directions

a critical look at the future of work and unemployment

Katherine Hughes
with David Hitchcock, Carole Lushington,
Ann Schofield and Tom Sherry

A pack of flexible and immediately usable interactive materials offering a wide curriculum, for use with adults concerned to better understand changes in society and to make positive changes in their own lives.

NIACE
THE NATIONAL ORGANISATION
FOR ADULT LEARNING

CE080056

Published by the National Institute of
Adult Continuing Education (England and Wales)

21 De Montfort Street
Leicester LE1 7GE
Company registration no. 2603322
Charity registration no. 1002775

First published 2000

© 2000 National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
(England and Wales)

All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without the written permission of the publishers, save in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, or under the terms of any licence permitting limited copying issue by the Copyright Licensing Agency.

NIACE, the national organisation for adult learning, has a broad remit to promote lifelong learning opportunities for adults. NIACE works to develop increased participation in education and training, particularly for those who do not have easy access because of barriers of class, gender, age, race, language and culture, learning difficulties and disabilities, or insufficient financial resources.

NIACE's website on the Internet is http://www.niace.org.uk

Cataloguing in Publication Data
A CIP record of this title is available from the British Library

Designed and typeset by Boldface, London EC1
Printed in Great Britain by Aspect Print

ISBN 1 86201 059 5

Contents

Introduction v

CHAPTER ONE *The future of work* 1

CHAPTER TWO *Unemployment* 21

CHAPTER THREE *Communications and democracy* 49

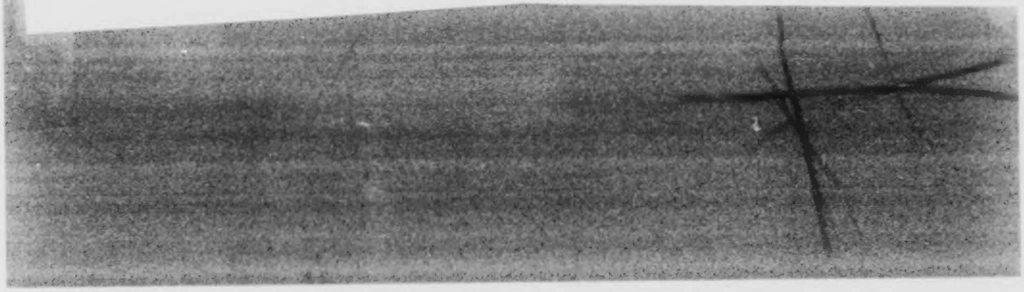
CHAPTER FOUR *Facing the figures* 77

CHAPTER FIVE *Culture is ordinary* 93

CHAPTER SIX *Identity and resistance* 113

CHAPTER SEVEN *Challenging and changing* 129

Appendices 163



Authors

KATHERINE HUGHES

Katherine is a tutor at Ruskin College, Oxford. She is responsible for the Ruskin Learning Project which generates educational initiatives with groups who have been educationally disadvantaged. She also teaches Women's Studies and Social Studies.

With

DAVID HITCHCOCK

David joined Changing Directions as a student, having experienced several years of unemployment. He is now working as a Residential Social Worker and studying for a degree with the Open University. He has contributed substantially to Chapter Four, *Facing the figures*, and several pieces to Chapter Seven, *Challenging and changing*.

CAROLE LUSHINGTON

Carole is a Guidance Worker with the New Start team in Oxfordshire. She has worked closely with Changing Directions since her appointment and helped individuals to move on very effectively. Her work appears in the Appendix.

ANN SCHOFIELD

Ann teaches Social Policy, Social Work and Community Work at Ruskin. She undertook work with the Cowley Closure Research Group which in part led to the establishment of Changing Directions. Ann has been central to the shaping of the values, format and activities of Changing Directions since its start. She has directly contributed to several chapters. The whole pack is also an expression of the work she has done.

TOM SHERRY

Tom is an English tutor at Ruskin College. He has taught on the Ruskin Learning Project for many years and has been with Changing Directions almost from its inception. He has made direct contributions to Chapter Six, *Identity and resistance*, and many of the ideas for Chapters Four and Six come from him.

Grateful thanks go to contributing students – Coral, Joanne, David, Alan, Cindy, Katherine, Ervine, Louisa, Michelle, Richard, Donald, Ann Marie; to Rosie Martin for her contributions about poetry and for organising the administration of Changing Directions so effectively; to Evelyn Shaw and her team for lunches and warm support; to Roger Sealey for his help with our conferences.

Special thanks to Jackie Cameron for so efficiently and patiently typing and re-typing this material.

Introduction

6

Introduction to the pack

HISTORY OF THE PACK

This pack of materials has grown directly from a course, entitled Changing Directions, running at Ruskin College Oxford.

Changing Directions developed in response to the changing shape of employment and unemployment locally. The car factory which dominated the city, employing 28,000 in 1974, had reduced its workforce to 5,000 by 1992. New jobs were developing in the service sector and retail but increasingly these were temporary or casual, often with few real prospects. More and more people were finding out the hard way about unemployment and employment insecurity and needed to rethink their direction.

In addition to this, increasing numbers of women were becoming more interested in extending their opportunities outside the home either through economic necessity or preference, or both.

The course was established for people wanting an opportunity to reconsider their relationship to employment. While more focused job-related courses were on offer, there was little that offered a chance to consider a change of direction in a wider sense by seeking also to make sense of the major upheavals of recent years.

The course content which forms the basis of this pack was therefore developed to meet a variety of needs, interests and concerns.

PHILOSOPHY

Underpinning the course is a view that the crucial issues to address are the relationships between work, citizenship and democracy. Mass unemployment and the restructuring of work threatens to destroy communities and individual lives with its disconnecting of people from active involvement in their societies against a background of relative security. Widening inequalities, increasing levels of poverty, social welfare cuts and increasing levels of insecurity threaten democratic involvement and practices in many ways. Also at stake is the extraordinary level of wastage of human potential and creativity.

WHO IT IS FOR

The pack is aimed particularly at groups, organisations and colleges working with people who are unemployed, partly employed or who have been at home for many years. It is for use with people who are trying to reassess their lives both in relation to work as well as in other possible directions such as volunteering, political or cultural involvement. It offers a wide curriculum which centrally addresses making more sense of contemporary changes, while considering various ways in which people might individually and collectively channel their creativities and social involvements. It thereby seeks to challenge the isolating and disconnecting effects of unemployment and community decline.

The material included is also relevant to a range of courses concerned with issues around unemployment and the future of work.

WHAT IS INCLUDED

The central focus of the material is a consideration of many aspects of unemployment and changing labour markets. Chapters on *The future of work* and *Unemployment* sketch in changes that are taking place both locally and globally and focus on topical debate and issues. *Challenging and changing* considers various ways in which individuals, groups and organisations are taking up some of these issues in order to benefit those who are most vulnerable to the negative effects of the restructuring of economies. Chapters on *Communication and democracy* and *Facing the figures* aim to help develop the skills and confidence needed by people in order to do this.

The chapters on culture - *Culture and democracy* and *Identity and resistance* perhaps need a special mention because few courses for the unemployed include such content. These chapters aim to sharpen an awareness of language, open doors to new interests, value talents and interests already developed and offer other forms both of critiquing social processes.

HOW IT IS ORGANISED

The purpose of the pack is to make available flexible and practical materials for a variety of uses. There is no attempt here to direct the way a course should be organised because it is the interests of participants and course leaders that they should have primacy in that. The materials are practical in that they are designed for immediate photocopying and use.

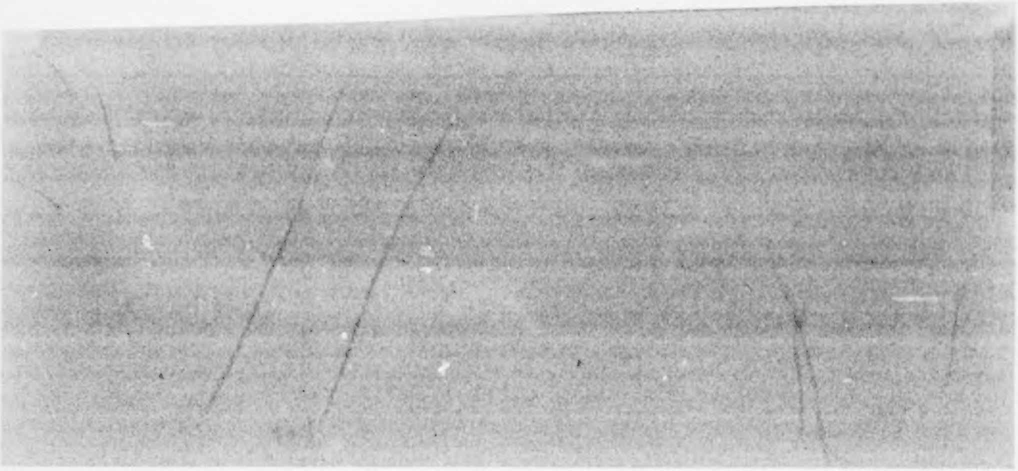
• • • • •

We have found running and developing *Changing Directions* to be both a challenging and immensely satisfying and constructive set of experiences. We hope you find the approach refreshing and the materials useful. We would be very pleased to hear your views.

1

The future of work

Introduction 2
Trends in work 3
Jobs – past, present and future 5
The future of work 6
Changing work patterns 8
Women and the future of work 10
Citizenship and work 12
Attitudes to work 13
Meaningful work 14
Going global 15
The future: which path should we follow? 17
And more optimistically?… 18



INTRODUCTION

The future of work is one of the most important discussions of the present time. Touching as it does on all aspects of people's lives, it embraces issues to do with income, citizenship, community, power and status. It is about how we can all live meaningful and worthwhile lives, rather than allowing that privilege only to a few.

Making sense of the rapidly moving global changes that are affecting us is hard to do. Work is altering dramatically with changes in technology, combined with curbing of trades unions and a shift towards allowing the free operation of the market, not only in the West and developing countries, but also in Eastern Europe and Russia. Global companies, without national loyalties, are increasingly out of the grasp of local governments, whose previously more successful economic instruments no longer work as they used to do. Competitive pressures, combined with mass unemployment, leading to cuts in welfare in the richer countries and structural adjustment policies in the poorer. Growth in production co-exists with a massive shedding of labour, so that globally millions of young people have never experienced paid work, and men and women face unemployment or a future of piecing bits of paid labour together. Rural communities in developing countries have been massively migrating to vast cities in the vain hope of finding work.

Not everyone suffers in these changes. Those who suffer most are the poor, landless labourers, women on low incomes with few skills and little access to credit or training, their children, people with outdated skills, young people, migrant workers and minority peoples. Political outcomes include the rise of nationalism and fundamentalism, the growth of fascism, authoritarianism and racism.

In such difficult times, people are more than ever likely to feel powerless. These feelings are more than understandable. The danger though is that despair sets in and people's sense of agency further diminishes.

As William Morris said:

> 'it is the allowing machines to be our master and not our servants that so injures the beauty of life nowadays'
> *News From Nowhere* (1934), p.177

This expresses a view that although we may be virtually unable to grasp the implications of changing technologies today, nevertheless, they are humanly constructed and operated and have to work with the constraints of human beings. To think otherwise hands all the benefits to those whom the system privileges, according it an inevitability that is simply not the case.

This chapter explores some of the trends in changing patterns of work today. It considers their implications for individuals and societies. It also explores the importance of work in people's lives and the value to people and society of meaningful work.

If there is to be less paid work in the future the options involve its concentration in the hands of a few with rising levels of poverty, insecurity and distress or a redistribution of employment, employment creation and imaginative alternative ways of securing people's involvement in their communities and societies. These issues are raised in the following materials.

Trends in work

EMPLOYMENT

Did you know that half the workforce is female?

- in the 1950s fewer than one tenth of jobs were part-time; today one quarter are part-time – 5.6 million.
- in 1954 four workers out of ten worked in manufacturing; today it is two out of ten; 4 million manufacturing jobs have been lost since 1979 (now only 4.6 million exist)
- service jobs have increased by more than two million since 1979 (to 15.6 million)
- today one in eight workers is self-employed
- today there are nearly as many women workers as men

UNEMPLOYMENT

Did you know that black workers have twice the unemployment of white workers?

- 22% of black workers are unemployed compared with around 6% white workers (by Claimant Count)
- nearly 400,000 claimants are women but over 1 million women are unemployed according to the Labour Force Survey (1997)
- in November 1997 700,000 people had been out of work for more than one year
- each unemployed worker costs £9,000 per year to support
- there have been at least 33 adjustments to the unemployment figures since 1979

HOURS, CONDITIONS AND SHIFTS

Did you know that only 55% of all jobs are now full-time?

- 20% of British workers now work regularly on a Sunday and over 40% sometimes do
- the number of workers with a second job rose to 1.1 million in April 1994
- only 19% of unskilled workers have ever been offered training by their current employer compared with 54% for supervisors and 70% for intermediate managers
- 800,000 people are working in part-time jobs (October 1997) because no other work is available

GENDER

Did you know that women still do most of the housework and childcare?

- 67% of women who work full-time still do most of the housework
- women in Britain make up one third (5 million) of all part-timers in the European Community
- women make up half the workforce but are even more likely to do the part-time low paid jobs e.g. 4.7 million part-time jobs occupied by women compared with 1.1 million occupied by men
- girls get more A levels than boys as well as more GCSEs
- only 5 out of 1,370 chief executives are women

INCOME AND WEALTH

Did you know that the poor are getting poorer?

- the bottom 20% of the population only get 6% of all income (1994) compared with 10% in 1979
- the top 20% of households increased their share from 35% to 43% between 1979 and 1994
- the proportion of children raised in poverty has risen from 25% to 33%
- 10 million employees (or 40%) in 1997 earned below the Council of Europe's decency threshhold (i.e. 68% national average wage)

GLOBAL

Did you know that Britain is part of a global economy?

- The combined sales of the largest 350 transnational corporations (TNCs) total nearly one third of the gross national products (GNP) of all industrialised countries and exceed the individual GNP of all Third World Countries.
- TNCs control 70% of world trade and much of it is between branches of the same parent firm.
- More than 90% of all TNCs have their headquarters in the industrialised world
- The 880 companies with their headquarters in the EC employ a registered total of 13.6 million people world-wide.
- British Telecom is one of the 10 largest companies operating in the EC

DISCUSSION

1 Pick four 'facts' from those above. Can you identify any connections between them?

2 Does women's increasing involvement in the labour market mean they have achieved equality with men?

3 What are the implications of the location and economic power of transnational corporations for national employment policies?

References

British Social Attitudes Survey 9th Report (1992-3)
Charles Handy (1994)
Labour Force Survey (Oct. 1997)
Veronica McGivney (1994)
The New Review – Low Pay Unit (Sept./Oct. 1997)
Noble & Smith, Joseph Rowntree Survey (1994)
Social Trends (1994 and 1997)
TUC *Full Employment* fact-sheet (1994)
Working Brief (Oct. 1997)

Jobs – past, present and future

WHAT SORT OF WORK, PAID AND UNPAID, DO MEN AND WOMEN DO?
e.g. types of work, housework, hours, conditions, security

YOUR PARENTS' GENERATION

YOUR GENERATION

YOUR CHILDREN'S GENERATION

DISCUSSION

1 What changes do you notice?

2 Why have there been these changes?

3 What changes have there been in women's lives?

4 What hopes and concerns do you have for the future generation?

The future of work

CHARLES HANDY'S VIEW

Charles Handy has written widely about changes in management, organisations and work. The following, in summary, are his recent ideas about global trends as expressed in *The Empty Raincoat* (1994).

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- There have been major technological changes especially in micro-chip technology and communications/ information technology
- A more globally competitive environment exists – where organisations have to compete more fiercely to cut costs and reach new markets
- This is leading to a global restructuring of companies and organisations. Organisations are becoming smaller and more streamlined. They operate increasingly in a global market with a global division of labour and little loyalty to national governments.

THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES

means the following:

- Work can be sent anywhere around the world.
- Managers can manage people they may never see.
- National governments have become less important.
- Corporations no longer see themselves as nationally based, but as transglobal.

'I was asked the other day about United States competitiveness and I replied that I don't think about it at all. We at NCR think of ourselves as a globally competitive company that happens to be headquartered in the United States'

Jonathan Schell New York Newsday, 1993. Quoted in Hobsbawm (1994) p.403

THE IMPACT OF THIS ON ORGANISATIONS AND WORK

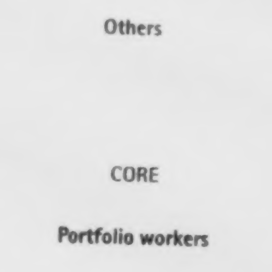
include the following:

- Organisations are becoming smaller.
- They are rapidly shedding labour.
- Organisations are more likely to consist of a small core of full-time highly skilled, usually male, flexible workers, a larger periphery of contract 'portfolio' workers and a larger number of people completely excluded from work.

Proper jobs are now expensive jobs, providing high-priced goods and services for those who can afford such things. For the rest it is do-it-yourself, pick your own olives, clean your own windows or collect your own milk...Keep them poor, as potential cheap labour when needed...That, at present seems to be the best we can do, offering bits and pieces of pocket money work...hamburger work for hamburger pay.

Charles Handy (1994) p.8

- The average working life is shrinking to 30 years; people at the core will end up working around 67 hours a week; half as many will be paid twice as much to produce three times as much; most of these will be men ($^1/_2 \times 2 \times 3$).



Charles Handy's 'doughnut'

- 'Portfolio' workers will piece together bits of work on contract to different organisations.
- A large pool of people with insufficient or outdated skills and education will be excluded altogether from other than the most menial and badly paid casualised jobs. The majority of people to be found here will be women and some ethnic minority groups.
- People can no longer expect a 'job for life'.

THE MEANS OF PRODUCING WEALTH

- Increasingly the key to producing wealth lies not in machines and muscle-power, but in people's brains, or 'know how'.

- Lifelong education and training therefore becomes vital.

THE DANGERS OF THESE TRENDS INCLUDE:

- **An increase in psychological stress for those both in and out of work.**

- **An increase in crime and growth of racism.**

- **Greater disadvantages for women, some ethnic minorities and migrant workers.**

- **A more divided and unequal society.**

What society therefore needs is the following:

1 Access to quality education and training so that people can update their skills. This must be particularly available for those who have had least.

2 Agencies, perhaps run by trade unions or private companies, that can help people find work for their portfolios.

3 A citizen's income to ensure minimum standards of income for everyone guaranteed as a basic right based on citizenship rather than national insurance payments.

DISCUSSION

1 How far do you agree or disagree that these are the main developing trends? What evidence can you give?

2 Who benefits from these changes and who loses?

3 What are the implications for women's future in the labour market? (who will care for the kids?)

4 What are the implications for members of different ethnic groups?

5 What are the political implications of these changes e.g. for the power of national governments, for democracy, for the growth of racism?

6 What are your views on Handy's solutions?

> **In pursuit of these goals, we can be tempted to forget that it is we, individual men and women, who should be the measure of all things, not made to measure for something else.**
> Charles Handy (1994) p.1

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

15

STRESS LINKED TO CONTRACT JOBS CULTURE

Adapted from an article by Chris Mihill printed in The Guardian on 4 January 1995

Stress at work will become a growing problem over the next 10 years as organisations increasingly hire contract or freelance workers rather than permanent staff, a leading psychologist said yesterday.

'We are entering an era of insecurity which will have implications for all of UK plc. We are entering a freelance culture. We are creating an army out there of contract workers,' said Gary Cooper, head of organisational behaviour at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology.

Professor Cooper told an occupational psychology conference at Warwick University, organised by the British Psychological Society: 'Within as little as 10 years many white collar professionals will be contract workers with a portfolio of jobs'.

'But we do not know what will happen to the organisations or to individuals from the point of view of health or productivity'.

Some industries, such as the media, already relied heavily on freelancers or short-term contract workers and this would become the norm for most businesses, increasingly affecting white-collar professionals rather than production line staff, he said. Mr Cooper said the psychological impact of this change on workers had not been studied nor had the implications for the productivity of organisations which employed them.

Mr Cooper said excessive stress at work had major effects on health, absenteeism, alcoholism and mental illness, but many managers were not yet convinced that stress was detrimental to productivity.

DISCUSSION

- **In what ways are workplaces becoming more stressful?**
- **Why are they becoming more stressful?**
- **Would hiring more counsellors be the answer to this?**

CHANGING WORK PATTERNS

Adapted from an article by Will Hutton printed in The Guardian on 28 October 1994

The 40-hour week, paid holiday and occupational pensions are seen as such a natural part of our working environment that we have forgotten how hard they were fought for by earlier generations and bitterly resisted by British business. But current events are beginning to offer a sharp reminder of how fragile these gains are.

If more than half the working population had full-time tenured jobs 20 years ago, now the proportion has fallen to barely a third. Even if you include those self-employed who are secure and the part-timers who actively want to work part-time, barely more than half the working population are working in conditions that earlier generations would recognise as secure employment. The rest have been plunged into the maelstrom of uncertainty, and conditions that 19th century factory workers would have recognised.

The worst is that the trends are unmistakable. If you are unemployed your chances of moving to a full-time job are negligible – your best chance is to find part-time or casualised employment. Nor when you hold such a job, is it very likely that you will move from that into full-time employment; the Government's statistics show that you are six times more likely to fall back into unemployment.

Economists on the free market right – and some on the maverick left – insist that the roots of this problem lie in regulation and the operation of the tax and benefit system, and that the growth of nomadic insecure employment has occurred because, in effect, millions are on the fiddle. They claim that they are working in casualised employment because they can pick up income support at the same time – and that the welfare system is underwriting a vast explosion of cheating and amoral behaviour. Business is essentially benevolent; the underclass is fundamentally amoral.

Yet it is hard to sustain the argument that people actively prefer the kind of work that is now on offer – or that the welfare system is notably more generous after 15 years of Conservative government. Zero-hour contracts, for example, in which firms agree no guarantee of work, pay no social overheads, offer no holiday, pension or sickness entitlements but simply require the holder to work as many hours of work as there are available have hardly arisen because such work is actively preferred. They occur because firms can get away with it.

The combination of weakened trade unions, abandoning full employment as a policy objective and scrapping labour market regulation – Britain ranks bottom of the international league tables according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – has been massively to change the balance of power between firms and their workforces. They can treat labour more as a disposable commodity and displace the risk of fluctuating demand onto their workers. They can meet the very high financial returns demanded of them by the City of London – but ordinary men and women have to live with the consequences.

Some (usually those whose partner has a full-time job) actively prefer the new environment; otherwise get by simply by cheating. But for the majority the conditions are oppressive and exploitative; and exploitation is never nice. The changes are going to the very marrow of our society.

One Harvard economist, Robert Lane, shows that in the insecure labour market it is hard to sustain friendships; you need stability and continuity for that. And long-term commitments (marriage, children and mortgages) are almost impossible when nothing is secure. The 40-hour week and full-time employment were never 'burdens' on business as the hard right Department of Employment insists; they were the cement which bound society together. Their disappearance is not to be celebrated; but mourned.

WILL HUTTON: WORK PATTERNS

On the way out...?

On the way in...?

Reasons for changes

Problems posed

Who is likely to suffer most and least...?

Women and the future of work

Women's lives are changing rapidly today. These changes are a product of economic pressures as well as struggles by women to improve their lives and those of their children. More and more households throughout the world are headed by women. More women are in the paid workforce, some successfully as new opportunities open up, others as part of an exploitable workforce.

The quiz below touches on some of the different aspects of women's lives in Britain and around the world.

Quiz

1. How many women in Britain are economically active?
☐ 6 million ☐ 9 million ☐ 12 million

2. How many women work part-time?
☐ 3 million ☐ 5 million ☐ 7 million

3. In what proportion of all jobs are women likely to be found?
☐ one quarter ☐ one half ☐ three quarters

4. What proportion of managers and administrators are women?
☐ 20% ☐ 30% ☐ 50%

5. How many women are officially unemployed?
☐ 0.3 million ☐ 0.6 million ☐ 2 million

6. A minimum wage of £4.15 would improve the wages of 4 million people, What percentage would be women?
☐ 30% ☐ 50% ☐ 70%

7. How many families are headed by a lone parent?
☐ 5% ☐ 10% ☐ 20%

8. What percentage of lone parent families are dependent on benefits?
☐ 40% ☐ 60% ☐ 70%

9. In Britain in 1995 1,500 girls passed A level computing. How many boys passed this exam?
☐ 1,300 ☐ 2,500 ☐ 6,000

10. The same number of women go to university as men today.
☐ True ☐ False

11. What proportion of violent crime reported to the police involves violence against women by their partners?
☐ 5% ☐ 25% ☐ 50%

12. What number of women MPs were elected to Parliament in 1997?
☐ 60 ☐ 120 ☐ 200

13. What proportion of local councillors are women?
☐ 10% ☐ 20% ☐ 45%

14. What proportion of senior civil servants are women?
☐ 4% ☐ 15% ☐ 30%

15. What proportion of Trade Unionists are women?
☐ 20% ☐ 40% ☐ 50%

16. How many Union General Secretaries are women? (out of 73 in the TUC)
☐ 2 ☐ 15 ☐ 25

17. What proportion of managing directors of large companies are women?
☐ 0.5% ☐ 3% ☐ 12%

18. On average worldwide women are paid less than men. How much less?
☐ 10% ☐ 25% ☐ 35%

19. How many more hours a week do women work in Africa and Asia than men?
☐ 5 ☐ 8 ☐ 13

20. What percentage of the world's Cabinet Ministers are women?
☐ 3% ☐ 10% ☐ 25%

21. The majority of workers making Levi's, Gap clothing and Nikes in Export Trading Zones are women. True or false?
☐ True ☐ False

22. What percentage of women over 25 in much of Africa and Asia are illiterate?
☐ 60% ☐ 75% ☐ 90%

ANSWERS

1. 12.3 million women are economically active today, almost the same number as men. This compares with 9 million in 1978. (*Social Trends* 1997)

2. 5 million women work part-time and this figure is increasing. Only 1 million men work part-time. Work is becoming increasingly casualised. Flexible contracts allow employers to use labour in ways in which it suits them. (Equal Opportunities Commission *Facts About Men and Women* 1996)

3. Women will still only be found in significant numbers in one quarter of all occupations. Teaching, nursing, caring, retail, catering, cleaning, factory work, clerical and secretarial, lower level management are the main areas of female occupation. Work patterns differ for ethnic minority women. West Indian women are under-represented in professional and managerial and Asian women are highly concentrated in manufacturing. In both cases they are also more likely to work full-time. (Richardson and Robinson 1994)

4. Around 30% of administrators and managers are women, which is an increase from earlier decades. (EOC 1994) In North America this figure is 46% but in Pakistan, Argentina and Turkey it is only 5%. (I.L.O. Survey in *The Guardian* 12/12/97)

5. Around 600,000 women are officially unemployed but clearly the 'real' figure is much higher. (EOC 1996)

6. 70% of those helped would be women. (European Labour Forum Winter 1994/95) In many areas of employment wages are being driven down and this is most adversely affecting women. Opportunities for training are also poor (McGivney 1994). USDAW in a recent survey found wages as low as £1 an hour for child minding, £2.50 for pub work and 82p for a hairdressing apprentice (USDAW 1994)

7. 20% of families are headed by a lone parent, usually a woman. This is higher for Afro-Caribbean families and lower for Asian. It also varies by social class. (EOC 1996)

8. 70% of these families depend on benefit. Britain is the only European country where single parent involvement in the labour market is reducing. (*Labour Research* May 1994)

9. 6,200 boys took this A level and passed. While girls do better in both GCSE and A levels today, patterns of subject choice are gender-linked especially in the sciences and maths. (EOC 1996)

10. True. This is a considerable move from the 1960s when girls only made up one third of undergraduates. Many women are joining higher education as mature students and many are taking part-time degrees. Subject choices are still highly gendered.

11. 25% of reported violent crime is perpetrated by a male partner (Zero Tolerance). Domestic violence, however, is a particularly under-reported area of crime. This is even so in Home Office victim studies.

12. 120 MPs were elected in 1997. This is a doubling of 60 in the previous parliament. It still means that 531 are men. (*Sociology Review* Nov. 1997)

13. 20% of local councillors are women and 80% are men. This is an improvement, but women still report finding local council work 'women unfriendly' (*Everywoman* April 1994)

14. Only 4% are women reflecting the masculine culture and career patterns of the Establishment.

15. 42% are women. Women in full-time work are as likely to be in a Union as men. Part-time workers have a density of 20% involvement. (*Labour Research*, March 1997)

16. Only two General Secretaries are women. Some Unions are making a major effort to ensure women are in their decision-making structures but progress is slow. (*Labour Research* March 1992)

17. Only 0.5% of managing directors are women. (ILO Survey reported in *The Guardian* 12.12.97).

18. Throughout the world women are paid 35% less than men even when doing the same work. This is due to lower promotion or discriminatory pay rates. (UN Report to Beijing Conference, *The Guardian* 1.9.95)

19. Women in Africa and Asia work, on average, 13 hours longer than men including housework, waged work, non-market economic activity and other money-raising ventures. (UN Report to Beijing Conference, *The Guardian* 1.9.95)

20. Only 3.5% of the world's Cabinet Ministers are women; 93 countries have none. They are more likely to appear in parliaments, but in Britain this is still only 18% (120 MPs). (United Nations *Human Development Report*, O.U.P., 1996)

21. This is true. Transglobal corporations find women workers willing to work long hours at low rates of pay in many countries of South America and the Caribbean. This is due to severe poverty. (*New Internationalist*, July 1996)

22. Three-quarters of women over 25 in many parts of Africa and Asia are still illiterate. The greater provision of primary and secondary education has improved women's education but this is being reduced as fees are being charged. (*New Internationalist*, January 1992)

Citizenship and work

CITIZENSHIP

"A society which excludes many of its members from full citizenship puts itself at risk. Extending full citizenship rights to all is, therefore, 'the main task of social policy'. As the fault lines of inequality widen beneath our feet, this is becoming an increasingly urgent task. For the sake of the future health and stability of society of our society and of the 'common good' we must put an end to the diverse policies of exclusion and start rebuilding the solid foundations that an effective web of citizenship rights can provide."
Ruth Lister (1991) *The Exclusive Society Citizenship and the Poor* Child Poverty Action Group p.23

WORK

Work is central to our lives. Paid or unpaid it is the way in which we meet needs, create wealth and distribute resources. It is a source of personal identity and individual fulfilment, social status and relationships. It is the heart of wealth and welfare.
Commission for Social Justice (1994)

There are many definitions of the word 'citizenship'. Some involve the idea of individuals looking out for themselves and their families instead of depending on society. The one used here involves the idea of creating a society from which none is excluded and within which everyone feels included. The role that paid work can play in making people feel included is considerable even if the work itself is boring or badly paid.

VIEWS ABOUT WORK

'Being in work stimulates other areas of your life. It keeps you busy and you have the money to do other things'.

'People always ask "what do you do?" What can you say to that? Going to work makes you feel involved with other people. It gives you a sense of identity.'

'I like the way work gives you a framework to your life. It organises your week for you so you don't have to think about how to spend the time so much.'

'Mind you, paid work can also be fairly meaningless and give you little time to do much else.' 'I sometimes wonder what I was doing all those years! I'd never want to go back.'

'Positive aspects of unemployment are that it gives you more time with your children especially when they are infants and toddlers. Time for studying and learning is also positive.'

ACTIVITY

In small groups, discuss what role work has played for you in making you feel more a part of society.

What is it about being out of work that can make you feel excluded from society? Is this inevitable?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Attitudes to work

The British Social Attitudes Table Survey of 1992/3 identifies the following reasons for working amongst men and women. Note the differences, and how few men say they enjoy working.

	Employees	
Reasons for working	% of Men	% of Women
Need money for basic essentials	80	59
To earn money to buy extras	36	43
To earn money of my own	24	34
Enjoy working	52	60
Working is the normal thing to do	32	18
To follow my career	42	28
For the company of other people	19	41
For a change from children/housework	2	17

If the future of work involves higher production but fewer working hours, society needs to find ways of including people other than through work. Using the following headings, what ideas do you have for achieving the following through other than paid work?

MONEY

STATUS

STIMULATION

SUCCESS

INVOLVEMENT

IDENTITY

ACCEPTANCE

How might some of these changes be brought about?

What will be the consequences to society of failing to do so?

Meaningful work

Having a job or housework and caring to fill up your time does not of course mean that all the work you do is satisfying or fulfilling.

> **'Working at home is bad for women. Far from the easy-paced routine, it is a kind of low-grade torture. Research by psychologists from Herriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, has revealed that the strain of looking after the kitchen and children can exact a considerable toll...'**
> **Erlend Clouston *The Guardian* 28/11/94**

> **'It's the most boring job in the world. It's the same thing over and over again. There's no change in it. It wears you out. It makes you feel awful tired. It slows your thinking right down.'**
> **Hugh Benyon *Working For Ford* (1984) p.129**

ACTIVITY

WHAT IS MEANINGFUL WORK AND HOW MEANINGFUL IS YOUR WORK?

FIRST...

Collectively identify and make a list of the various INGREDIENTS of meaningful work, paid or unpaid. The list can be as long as you like but try and find around 15 ingredients.

e.g. decent pay
feeling valued
variety

SECOND...

Referring to any job you have done or do, go through each item in the list awarding them points, 1 = low and 5 = high.
When you have finished add up the score.

THIRD...

In turn explain your score to the group identifying where you scored particularly high or low.
Say how the job you have analysed might be made more meaningful.

DISCUSSION

1. Which jobs in society do you consider to be more or less meaningful?

2. Does having a meaningless job matter?

3. How could jobs in general be made more meaningful – or should other compensations be found meaningless?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Going global

FACTS

- 70% of world trade is controlled by transnational corporations and much of this trade is between different branches of the same corporation.
- in Britain by the 1980s transnational corporations accounted for 80% of British exports.
- 80% of corporate investment goes to richer countries.
- 70% of the rest goes to only 10 richer developing countries called Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs)
- 800m people, or one third of the global workforce, are unemployed.

[Sources: *The Age of Extremes* Hobsbawm (1994); *New Internationalist* August 1993]

GLOBALISATION – WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

PepsiCo has annual sales of $19.7 billion. It has 500 plants throughout the world. 335,000 workers operate in 100 countries.

- Most immediately it means we can all drink Pepsi, eat Macburgers and wear Levi's wherever we are in the world – if we can afford to.
- Large companies have spread around the globe investing wherever they can get the best return and with no loyalty to any particular country.
- Countries try to get hold of some of this investment by offering Free Trade Zones – areas where there are no taxes or trades unions for companies to worry about. These exist in places like Mexico, Malaysia and Jamaica.

Companies are less attached than ever to their countries of origin. And as their loyalty fades, so does any ultimate responsibility for their actions.
New Internationalist
August 1993

- Poor countries receive very little investment – including the whole continent of Africa.
- The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe has meant a rapid move by transnationals into Eastern Europe and Russia leading in many cases to the destruction of local industries, local food production and jobs.

Further East, in the Ukraine, billboards abound explaining the virtues of Sony, Honda, Pepsi and Coca-Cola and the joys of smoking Marlboro
New Internationalist
August 1993

WHAT HAS MADE THIS POSSIBLE?

- New technologies mean information can be speeded around the world. This makes the management of a global division of labour a possibility. It also allows capital to move freely around the globe investing wherever a rapid return can be made.
- Policies of deregulation including the abolition of exchange controls have become more extensive globally and are encouraged by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

EFFECTS ON DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

- For those countries in debt, deregulation is a condition for IMF and World Bank loans. Developing countries have to structurally adjust their economies. This involves privatising state industries, cutting public spending, and abolishing minimum standards e.g. in wages and devaluing the currency.
- This package of requirement is similar to the restructuring of welfare and the economies in western countries.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PROBLEMS FOR WORKERS

- While capital can move freely around, labour cannot.
- Companies can move work to where labour is cheaper, thereby forcing wages down in other countries.
- Companies are rapidly shedding labour causing global unemployment. Competition with local industries also leads to unemployment.
- Welfare states, where they exist, are being cut back and altered. Where they barely exist, workers and families are very vulnerable to poverty, hunger, disease.
- Women and children are particularly badly hit by global changes because they are more marginal in the paid economy and have the greater need of services. They are more likely to lose out educationally and their workloads increase as they add (more) paid work to unpaid work and caring.
- Trade unions are discouraged and are damaged further by mass unemployment.

PROBLEMS FOR LOCAL STATES

- The sovereignty of local states and their governments are eroded.
- This makes it difficult for national parliaments to have much control over their local economies, hence the move to wider organisations such as the European Community.
- Racism is on the increase as governments blame migrant workers for unemployment – instead of the operations of the global corporations, and the pressures of competition.
- Inequalities are widening and with them symptoms of community disintegration such as increasing infant mortality, ill health, as well as crime, drug taking.

DISCUSSION

1. You are a top director of a multi-national company. Identify a list of criteria which would guide you in making investment decisions... would you consider investing in Britain, Mozambique, Thailand?

2. Is there a threat to local cultures by the globalisation of products and global culture? Does it matter? Are local cultures fighting back?

3. What are the causes of unemployment globally? What are the implications of such high levels of unemployment?

4. What similarities can you identify between structural adjustment in developing countries and the restructuring of welfare in Europe and America?

THE FUTURE:
which path should we follow?

The future may be shaped by the past but its outcome is not pre-determined. This is because people are struggling for different kinds of futures based on alternative sets of values and interests. Below are two of many possible sets of ideas about how the future should look. They reflect some of the struggles taking place now for changes that people would prefer to see. Read through these and then, using the headings, write down what sort of future you would prefer to see. When you have sorted your ideas out, share your thoughts in small groups, or in the class.

WORK - work is shared and available to all - people have more leisure - machines have taken over the boring or heavy jobs - men and women will have equal access to all forms of employment	**WORK** - 'core' workers have good pay and security - others will piece work together as portfolio workers - those without relevant skills will be excluded - young people will have to struggle to find work
WELFARE - everyone is guaranteed a basic living standard - quality services will meet needs for education, housing, health etc. - there will be a wide consultation about the services we want	**WELFARE** - individuals will need to make provision for themselves or rely on families - benefits will only be for the 'deserving' poor - charity will be encouraged - workfare will be introduced
TECHNOLOGY - it will be cheap and widely available - we will all know how to use it	**TECHNOLOGY** - it will be limited in availability - it will be more prevalent in masculine workplaces - women will have greater difficulty in gaining access
EDUCATION AND TRAINING - education and training will be for all stages of life - it will be widely available - those who have been most disadvantaged will have greater access	**EDUCATION AND TRAINING** - training will be left to the employers - most training will be for the 'core' - individuals must fund themselves
HOUSEWORK AND CARING - men and women will share household tasks - caring will be valued as it deserves - support services will provide care options for children, disabled and elderly	**HOUSEWORK AND CARING** - women will carry the burden - more children will be raised in poverty - fewer women may have access to 'core' jobs
POLITICS - there will be wider involvement of people at all levels of government - representatives will reflect more closely gender and race profiles of the population - all workers will have access to joining trades unions	**POLITICS** - there will be less democracy and accountability - people will need to conform - civil liberties will become more limited - more prisons will be built
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES - discrimination by age, sex, race, disability and sexuality will be dealt with seriously - childcare will make equal opportunities a reality	**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES** - 'portfolio' working will make this less meaningful - the cheapest person for the job will become more common - women and some ethnic minorities will often be used for cheap labour
RELATIONSHIPS - will be based on equality - no adult will be economically dependant on another - homosexual and lesbian relationships will have the same status as heterosexual - partnerships will be more likely to survive with stresses removed	**RELATIONSHIPS** - there will be greater pressures on relationships - non-traditional relationships will be stigmatised - divorce will be made harder - abuse and violence will increase - young people will have problems establishing relationships without work or housing

and more optimistically...?

In a more positive view of the future, we would all have more time and resources to develop our full potential and live interesting and worthwhile lives. How would you want to do this?

I'd like to understand more about...

I'd like to visit...

I'd like to meet...

I'd like to know more about...

I'd like to learn...

I'd like to have a go at...

I'd like to have more say in...

I'd like to organise...

Jot down some thoughts and share them with a small group. It may be that not all this needs to be a pipe dream. You may like to discuss ways in which some of your ideas could happen.

REFERENCES

British Social Attitude Survey 9th Report (1992-3), Roger Jowell et al

Equal Opportunities Commission (1996), *Facts about Men and Women*

European Labour Forum (Winter 1994)

Handy, Charles (1994), *The Empty Raincoat*, Hutchinson

Hobsbawm, E. (1994), *Age of Extremes. The Short Twentieth Century*, Michael Joseph

Hutton, W. *The Guardian* (28.10.94), Changing Work Patterns

International Labour Organization Survey, *The Guardian* (12.12.97)

Labour Research (March 1992), Challenging the Men in Suits

Labour Research (March 1997), Women in Trade Unions

Labour Research (May 1994), Why British Lone Parents Lose Out

McGivney, V. (1994), *Wasted Potential. Training and Career Progression for part-time and Temporary Workers*, NIACE

Maskell, Jean, *Everywoman* (April 1994), Loneliness of the Lone Woman

Mihill, Chris, *The Guardian* (4.1.95), Stress linked to contract jobs culture

Morris, William (1934), *News from Nowhere*, Longman

New Internationalist (January 1992 and July 1996)

Noble, M. and Smith, T. (1994), *Changing Patterns of Income and Wealth in Oxford and Oldham*, Joseph Rowntree

Politics Review (September 1997)

Richardson, D. and Robinson, V. (1994), *Introducing Women's Studies*, Macmillan

Social Trends 1994-1997

Sociology Review (November 1997)

The New Review of the Low Pay Unit No.47, (September/October 1997)

TUC (1994), *Full Employment Fact Sheet*

United Nations (1996), *Platform for Action and the Beijing Declaration*

U.N. Report to the Beijing Conference, *The Guardian* (1.9.95)

Working Brief (November 1997)

Zero Tolerance Fact Pack

USEFUL ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

British Social Attitudes Survey – this comes out once a year with different editors and covering different topics. A European version also exists.

European Labour Forum – produced by Labour Party MEPs, this is an invaluable periodical for discussions about issues around work and full employment, available from Spokesman, Bertrand Russell House, Gamble Street, Nottingham NG7 4ET

Labour Research – a monthly journal with very useful material about trends locally and globally in work and unemployment; takes race and gender issues seriously.

New Internationalist – a monthly periodical which brings an international perspective to bear on many issues related to this subject.

Working Brief – is produced regularly by the Unemployment Unit and includes information relating to figures, legal aspects, training, youth issues, race issues etc.

2

Unemployment

Introduction 22 What do you think about unemployment? 23
Unemployment – a quiz 24 Causes of unemployment 26
Who gets into the figures? 27 Young people and unemployment 28
A New Deal? 30 Black, British and on the dole 31
Are the unemployed an underclass? 33 Job Seeker's Allowance 35
Welfare to Work 37
Mental health consequences of unemployment 39
Unemployment historically – whose problem? 40
The European dimension 41
Different views on unemployment in the European Union 42
Unemployment in Central and Eastern Europe 44
Unemployment and poverty in developing countries 46
Young people 47

INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to sketch in the extent and nature of unemployment locally, in Europe and beyond. It aims also to identify both historically and contemporarily the responses of the state to the unemployed, making connections past and present. It explores aspects of the underclass debate and considers different explanations for unemployment and related concerns such as health and crime.

The extent of unemployment and underemployment in Britain is masked by the official figures which reflect politically shaped definitions and, in many parts of the world, a serious difficulty in collection. The Unemployment Unit considers that in Britain, by 1979 definitions, nearly 4 million would be officially unemployed.

However the figures are collected, what is plain is the devastating nature of the problem both locally and globally. Increased global competitiveness, restructuring of industry and organisations and changing technologies with a weakening of labour organisations are general features of these developments.

Patterns of vulnerability are not the same everywhere but there are general tendencies for certain groups to be more at risk – unskilled workers, people with outdated skills, ethnic minorities, young people, older people, women.

In recent years, a sense of insecurity amongst all workers has increased and groups who once felt secure no longer feel so. The political implications of this are yet to unfold, but the social impact is clearer with increasing levels of poverty and the psychological and health effects of exclusion and anxiety.

The response of the state to unemployment varies, with countries like Sweden and Denmark still struggling to offer decent benefits pegged to a minimum wage level, reflecting a view that unemployment should not exclude people from citizenship.

By contrast Britain has moved quite considerably from the post-Beveridge settlement involving more benignly benefits as of right on proof of deservingness to a more punitive and authoritarian approach exemplified in the Jobseeker's Allowance. Jobseeker's Allowance aims to coerce people into low paid work, encourage the further development of a low paid economy and outside that ensure people are kept in the enforced idleness of the equivalent of stone breaking – job seeking when there are few real jobs. This intentionally excludes people from educational and other cultural activities and the development of a critical intelligence. There are profound historical resonances with the poor law as it has operated down the centuries. We are told that we have an underclass who do not share the work ethic and family values. Moral panics surround lone parents, youth and even children.

This chapter challenges these views, and indeed the term '*underclass*' itself. Instead it argues that people are being excluded not only from work but also from society itself and that this has negative implications for the individuals and groups themselves and for society as a whole. These include a serious increase in poverty, a diminution of democracy, an increase in racism and a growth of anti-social behaviour as well as many other manifestations of individual and social disintegration.

What do you think about unemployment?

What are your views on the following statements?

Unemployment is not a big issue any more.

Being unemployed is worse for young people.

Being unemployed is worse for men.

You are more likely to become unemployed or fail to get a job if you're black.

You're more likely to get a job if you have skills.

Being unemployed has no effect on your health.

Being unemployed is all your own fault.

Any job is better than no job.

Unemployment suggests idleness but most unemployed people are very busy.

Losing a job can jolt you into making positive changes in your life.

Quiz

1. What is the official unemployment rate for Britain?

☐ 5%
☐ 10%
☐ 14%

2. What is the rate for Northern Ireland?

☐ 8%
☐ 11%
☐ 14%

3. What proportion of unemployed males have been unemployed for more than one year?

☐ 25%
☐ 33%
☐ 45%

4. What number of unemployed people have been lost from the official figures since 1979?

☐ 500,000
☐ 1,000,000
☐ 1,500,000

5. How many women are officially unemployed?

☐ 400,000
☐ 600,000
☐ 1,000,000

6. What number of people aged 16–64 are not economically active in Britain?

☐ 2 million
☐ 4 million
☐ 7.5 million

7. How many people under 25 years are without work?

☐ 500,000
☐ 800,000
☐ 1,000,000

8. What proportion of Afro-Caribbean and Pakistani people are officially unemployed?

☐ 8%
☐ 12%
☐ 16%

9. 33% of the unqualified workforce are without a job.

☐ True
☐ False

10. There were 4.9 million part-time workers in 1984. How many were there by 1995?

☐ 5.5 million
☐ 6 million

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

UNEMPLOYMENT QUIZ ANSWERS AND DISCUSSION

1. The official rate for Britain is 5% (*Labour Research* December 1997). However, the Unemployment Unit's *Working Brief* (November 1997) argues that using a Labour Force Survey definition to include all who want work and would be ready to start in two weeks would yield a figure of 2.8 million for Summer 1997. The Government plans to use the L.E.S. definition in future.

2. The official rate in Northern Ireland is 11.4% (*Regional Trends* 1996). Why do you think it is higher than in Britain as a whole?

3. Around 33% of male unemployed have been unemployed for more than one year (*Working Brief* November 1997). These are the long-term unemployed and it is the rise in these figures that indicates the seriousness of the problem. Philpot in Glyn and Miliband (1993) argues, 'while all unemployment is wasteful, long-term unemployment appears to be a total waste since it fails even to offer a pay-off in terms of controlling inflation' p.144

4. There have been over 1,000,000 people lost from the official figures since 1979. This is almost exclusively to do with government changes in definitions of unemployed. Of 33 changes to figures since 1979 only a couple have increased the official figures. Lost too have been people who have been chased off the register.

5. While almost 600,000 women are officially unemployed (*Working Brief* November 1997), 1.4 million are ready to start work (Unemployment Unit Spring 1994) and many more would work if child care was available. *Labour Research* (May 1994) found that Britain is the only European country where lone mothers are less likely to work than mothers with partners. The reason is lack of child-care.

6. The numbers of people without paid work in Britain is now 7.6 million (*Social Trends* 1997). Men and women have different reasons for this. For men, sickness; for women, childcare.

7. The number of young people without work is around 500,000 – though as recently as 1995 it was one million. This includes between 1990 and 1994 a fall of 56% in employment amongst under 21s! The bulk of the fall in full-time employment in recent years fell on the young unemployed (Hughes in Coates 1995). For black young people the situation is much worse. In London 62% of black men between 16 and 24 are unemployed compared with 20% of white men. (*Observer* 12/2/95) Recently, unemployment for young people aged 16-17 has increased (*Working Brief* November 1997).

8. Unemployment rates are much higher for certain ethnic minority groups. It is 16% for Afro-Caribbean and Pakistani groups. This is probably for a combination of reasons including the collapse of industries for which migrant workers were originally recruited, public sector cuts, lack of retraining and an increase in discrimination.

9. This is true. The unqualified are most vulnerable to lack of work. If you consider that only 39% of the workforce has a qualification the equivalent of NVQ level 3 the size of the training problem becomes obvious. (*Social Trends* 1995)

10. The trend in casualising labour is moving apace. There are now 6.1 million part-time workers, most of whom are white women. Martin Woollacott comments (*The Guardian* 27/5/95) on 'the readiness of employers to do things to workers in the group or as individuals that they would not have dreamed of ten years ago…the truth in Europe seems to be that many employers are less and less interested in workers at all on any but the most casual and distant terms.' If unemployment is falling it is usually because of the increase in part-time jobs. Between 1990 and 1995 1.5 million full-time jobs were lost. Increasing numbers are being encouraged off the register. In 1995 it was 300,000. (Hughes in *European Labour Forum* Summer 1996). Since the introduction of the Jobseeker's Allowance it has been more.

The most reliable sources for unemployment figures in UK and related discussions are *Working Brief* and *Labour Research.*

Causes of unemployment

The following are some possible causes of unemployment. There is no definitive explanation because different commentators and politicians emphasise different factors. The discussion also begs the question about what we mean by being employed today. Is a few-hours-a-week post a 'real job' or a sign of things to come?

Consider how far you agree or disagree with the following possible explanations for higher unemployment.

- increasing international competition since early 1970s leading to a rationalisation of the workforce by large global companies.
- increasing use of new technologies in a more globally competitive environment leading to jobless growth.
- failure of some countries to encourage a 'flexible' workforce.
- the shift of manufacturing jobs to developing countries with cheaper labour forces.
- the 'de-industrialisation' of Britain in the 1980s.
- people's over-reliance on the state to provide jobs and welfare which has sapped initiative and independence.
- free market government policies which have meant a refusal to support ailing industries and a willingness to import foreign goods and materials.
- women are taking men's jobs.
- trades unions which have been inflexible about change and promoted uncompetitive work practices.
- cuts in public spending and efficiency savings
- a low educational base with half as many pupils gaining 3 good GCSEs and 2 good A levels as German counterparts (Tony Blair, Ruskin speech 16/12/96).

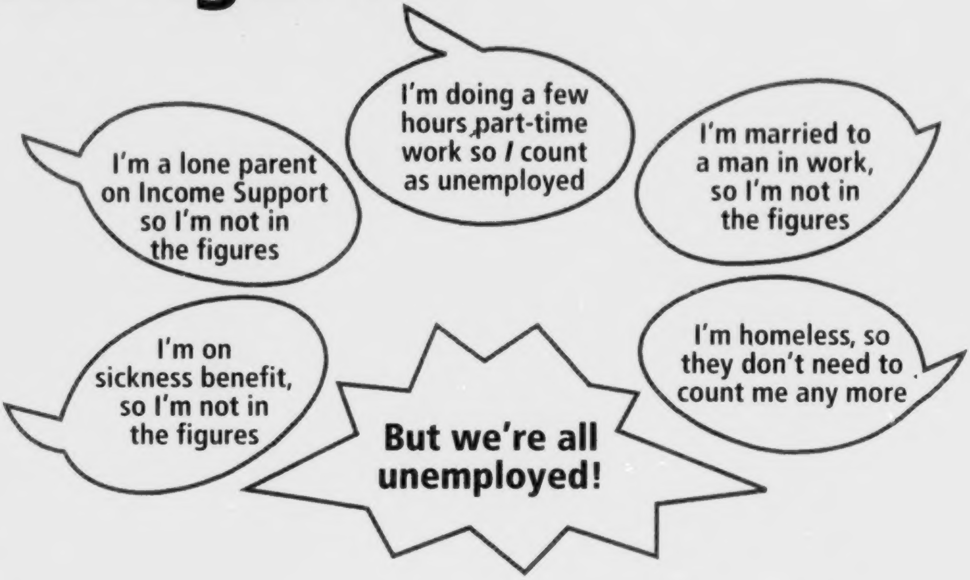
You may wish to add more ideas to your list.

What sorts of people are likely to argue the different points above?

Recent research produced by the Unemployment Unit highlights shortfalls in the two official measures of unemployment used in Britain. These are the claimant count, which currently produces a figure of 1.92 million unemployed and the Labour Force Survey (LFS) which produces a current jobless figure of 2.26 million. However, the Unemployment Unit says the true answer to the question 'How many people in Britain are unemployed?' is 'Britain needs 5.4 million jobs'.

Labour Research January 1997

Who gets into the figures?


I'm a lone parent on Income Support so I'm not in the figures
I'm doing a few hours part-time work so I count as unemployed
I'm married to a man in work, so I'm not in the figures
I'm on sickness benefit, so I'm not in the figures
But we're all unemployed!
I'm homeless, so they don't need to count me any more

SO WHO DOES GET INTO THE FIGURES?

- An internationally recognised way of counting the unemployed based on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition is to include all those seeking work, who are in a position to start and who are seeking work.

BUT

- In Britain the numbers are based on the Claimant Count. At least 33 changes have been made to the way figures are counted since 1979, almost all bringing the figures down.

- In many parts of the world countries do not have the resources or will to count the unemployed accurately. Where they are collected they underestimate numbers because many people losing jobs go back to the countryside. In some countries of South America and Africa unemployment could be as high as 50%.

ACTIVITIES

Discuss in small groups

1. Would you consider any of the following as being unemployed if they were wanting substantial paid work?
- a woman working five hours a week
- a young mother without childcare
- a fifty-year-old pushed into early retirement
- a homeless person
- a young person not on a government scheme

2. What are the limitations of the two definitions of unemployment – the ILO definition and the British Claimant Count?

3. How many of your group members feature in the official figures? For what reasons do others not?

4. What reservations might you have if the government tells you that unemployment figures are falling?

Young people and unemployment

'...if a sizeable portion of the young have no stake in a society, then society itself appears to have given up its stake in the future..'
Ralf Dahrendorf *New Statesman* 12/6/87

Young people, and particularly young males, are becoming a target of public concern today. A failure to inculcate moral values by parents and teachers is blamed for rising crime levels, falling educational standards and a lack of seriousness about marriage. A level syllabuses from 1997 will include clauses stating that all subjects should 'contribute wherever possible to students' spiritual, moral and cultural development' (*Observer* 27/10/96). Politicians are discussing curfews on young children and parent-craft classes may be offered to all prospective parents.

It is probably no coincidence that these debates are taking place at a time when prospects for young people throughout the world have perhaps rarely looked so insecure.

SOME FACTS

- until the late 1960s the unemployment rate for young people was the same as for older people; after that it steadily worsened.

- in April 1990 1.3 million young people under 21 were in full-time employment; by 1994 this number had fallen by 56%; employment for under-18s fell by 73%; only 20% can be explained by demographic changes; young women and men have been equally badly affected.

- the young people who are most vulnerable are men and women with few qualifications, young people in inner city areas and especially black young men.

- young people who do find work face very low wages; a Jobcentre survey (*Labour Research* October 1994) found 29% of vacancies paid less than someone would receive on benefits: earnings for 18-20 year old males in full-time work fell from 78% of average male earnings in 1979 to 68% in 1994; for women they fell from 87% to 82% of average female earnings

'...the numbers dwarf the old vocabulary that spoke of the "reserve army" of the unemployed. In 1994 the numbers of service personnel in H.M.'s whole army, navy and airforce only totaled 36% of those young people aged 18-24 that stood unemployed.'
(Hughes *op. cit.*)

'The bulk of the fall in full-time employment in 1990-1994 (1.7 million full-time jobs) fell on the shoulders of the under-25s.'
(Hughes in Coates 1995)

'McDonald's announced that soon it would be the largest employer of 16-24 year olds.'
The Guardian 2/1/98

POORER PROSPECTS

- the loss of craft jobs with apprenticeships the loss of semi- and unskilled manufacturing jobs the growing numbers of part-time jobs which are more likely to be given to women than young people.

- in many developing countries youth unemployment can be as high as 70% and there are no benefits – reasons include factory closures and a greater need for jobs by a growing population. Debt and gross inequality in incomes is the backdrop.

IMPACT ON YOUNG PEOPLE

- A comprehensive report prepared for Wolverhampton City Council in 1996, argues that it is in inner city areas that we are witnessing what it calls a '*new social condition*'. They found that the young long-term unemployed were becoming increasingly pessimistic and had been left in a state of '*suspended animation*', cut off from anticipated futures of leaving home, material consumption and marriage.

- It is often a world punctuated by social crisis, by domestic breakdown, violence, ill-health and even suicide. Temporary training schemes are the only lifeline which the Government extends to this lost generation. (Dann Finn 1988)

- Some young women become mothers in an attempt to find independence and adult status and to end the demoralising failure to find jobs. (Campbell 1986)

- The Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit research found that literacy standards are falling; twenty year olds are particularly affected; people in their 20s have lower literacy and numeracy standards than those 10 and 20 years older. (ALBSU 1995)

- Many young people are entering sixth forms, Further Education and Higher Education; at the same time, facilities are being relatively cut, teacher workloads are increasing and student debt is on the increase. Plans for university fees are now likely to deter many young people.

- Throughout the world drug-taking and burglary are on the increase (Wells, 1995)

However, it is also true that young people have responded to a lack of prospects creatively. Environmental and animal rights have been of great concern. Highlighting issues of homelessness through squatting and travelling, young people have also offered challenges to the material and conservative values of comfortable and smug security.

DISCUSSION

- **Which young people are facing the greatest problems and why?**

- **Falling educational standards, crime, rioting, drug-taking and violence often are placed at the door of lone-parents, weak teachers and the morality of children born into a 'culture of dependency' bred of the welfare state. What are your views on this?**

- **Boys are doing less well than girls at school. Do you think the state of employment for young people has anything to do with it? If so, how?**

A new deal?

The Labour government responded to high youth unemployment with a New Deal to encourage young people into education, training and work. Young people are offered five Options:

1. **Employment – in private sector with £60 a week subsidy to employer for 6 months**
2. **Full-time education and training**
3. **Voluntary Sector work experience and one day's training**
4. **Environmental Taskforce – work on community projects**
5. **Self-employment with support**

Refusal to participate may mean a 40% benefit cut.

YOUR VIEWS

1. What would make New Deal work in your eyes?
2. Should participation be compulsory?
3. Should lone parents or disabled young people be made to participate?
4. Will New Deal create a better future for young people?

POINTS IN FAVOUR

- Many people need pressure to get back to work.
- It will create public spending cuts.
- Private employers will be encouraged to create jobs.
- Lone parents often want to work.
- Young people will get education and training.
- Work experience will be provided.
- New Deal will create a new work ethic.

RESERVATIONS

- There will be pressure on young people to take dead-end jobs.
- If it is carried out properly the scheme will be expensive.
- Private employers may cease to employ after 6 months.
- By working, lone parents won't necessarily be better off.
- Education and training by compulsion will not lead to motivated students.
- There is no mention of Trade Union rights in the New Deal.
- New Deal will create even more stigma for the unemployed.

Black, British and on the dole

Britain as a colonial country built its industrial base on slavery and has ever since used labour from the ex-colonies to meet gaps where local labour was scarce such as in manufacturing, public transport and the NHS. These areas of work have proved some of the most vulnerable to closures or cuts. Because of this, as well as discrimination and racist attitudes, young black people, especially men, are highly vulnerable to unemployment and limited futures.

A Labour Force Survey (*Observer* 12/2/95) found that in terms of the official figures, 62% of black men under 25 years old are unemployed. Unofficially the figure is of course much higher. These overwhelmingly are second generation children of parents who were encouraged to come to Britain in the 1950s and 1960s to find a better life.

'Them white people cause we to live like this. Them used we father and mother to do them shit-work when them came to Britain first; now we can't even get no job no matter how hard the job is. The want to bring back the days of slavery pon the earth but we naugh stand for it. If you black a dog get better treatment than you.'

Young Afro-Caribbean man in Brixton

The following extracts come from original research conducted by a mature student, Fred Alvaranga, in Brixton amongst young black men (Ruskin College 1995). In the interviews he conducted, Fred was able to show that the values of the black men he spoke to were the same as most other people's. They wanted decent education and training, housing and above all, a job.

EDUCATION

'A lot of teacher don't teach you the right way. Them don't deal with nothing useful to we black people, is a culture thing. Them a teach you about Battle of Hastings 1066, bought Christopher Columbus 1492 and all that. What dat have to do with me. That can't get me no job. Most of them don't like me. Them say we loud and aggressive cause we no sit still and we no take them 'shit.' One man used to write on the blackboard read these 20 pages then copy them down. Soon as him finish writing, him gone for tea and cigarette in the staff room. How could we learn anything with people like then about. We suffer for it now with no learning'

'The teachers at my school just weren't interested in your potential. As soon as you come to the school and they saw you were black, into the lower classes you would go. All the time I was there not one black kid was in the A or B classes… The attitude of the teacher towards then black kids was we're OK for running, jumping and sport. Anything else no!

STEREOTYPES

'White people sees black youth as mugger, hand-bag snatcher, rapist, burglar, unemployed, him a ganga (marijuana) crackhead, social security scrounger. Tea cosy on his head, but it isn't so; everybody have ambition to do something'

RACISM

'The first time I ever came across the thing is when I was around 9 years old. I was on a 2B bus coming from Stockwell with some of me friends from school when a white man to let an old white woman sit down. I tell him me not move, give her your seat. At this the white man say the thing and the way he look. I still remember it from me youth. When I reach hone I tell my mother. She say, pay them no mind.'

'White people don't consider for black people the prejudice against we in job world and life in general. If I see a job or a room in the paper me phone up and cause you can talk the cockney style them say come round and check it out. Soon as they see you – boy! The job and the room gone. The worst one is the Babylon (police). Them a just something else.'

UNEMPLOYMENT

'Some of my friends go to Lambeth (local College), persevere with then course. Work in the day, study in the night. Them do it for two years, get the paper (degree etc.) and them still work in them 'shit job'. If you have white boys and them can't find a job with the same 'paper' what chance the black man have and that's the truth man. I used to work on the building doing a bit of labouring, When anything happen, you just know who is going to get shot.'

'We don't went them to give us nothing. Them must treat us better cause we not going nowhere. Here we were born and here we stay and give us jobs and things. We want what everybody expect, Just a chance to better weself, opportunity man, opportunity'

DISCUSSION

1) What reasons do the young men interviewed give for being unemployed?

2) What are their experiences of racism and discrimination?

3) How are these borne out in the newspaper article?

4) Do you think unemployment necessarily leads to increases in racism?

5) Which individuals or organisations are likely to be damaged by a rise in racism?

How can all young men and women have access to decent education and training facilities?

Blacks stranded at back of jobs queue

Anthony Bevens
and Dean Nelson

HARD evidence that young blacks are at the bottom of the employment pile is provided by the latest Government survey of Youth Training leavers. The figures show that young blacks fare worse than the disabled when it comes to finding jobs.

The survey of those who took Youth Training courses between December 1992 and January last year shows that only one in four young blacks found jobs, compared with a third of disabled trainees and half of whites.

Bernie Grant, Labour MP for Tottenham, said. the figures were 'horrific' and warned of a wave of riots if the Government did not take urgent measures to tackle black unemployment.

The figures are published against a background of increasing Government concern at levels of black unemployment and calls from Labour for urgent action to help young urban blacks into work. In London, 62 per cent of black men between 16 and 24 are unemployed, compared with 20 per cent of whites in the same age group.

Black community leaders said the figures confirmed anecdotal evidence that Youth Training was failing black job seekers. They said black youths faced racial discrimination on Youth Training courses through poor career guidance.

Mr Grant said: 'London is a giant blackspot for unemployment, and the TECs (training and enterprise councils) must take their share of the blame. In black, working-class areas they offer courses in bartending. In middle-class areas, it's computer studies.'

Elaine Smith of Finsbury Park Community Trust in north London said young blacks were often advised to take construction skill courses with no opportunity of gaining work experience. 'I worked in Youth Training for six years and what happened was that the young black men were trapped in a workshop for six months while the white trainees would do four days a week with local employers and only one day at college. The blacks were told they needed all the workshop training they could get. This disparity in finding jobs reflects the guidance young blacks are being given.'

Reprinted from *The Observer*
Sunday 12 February 1995

Are the unemployed an underclass?

The term 'underclass' has enjoyed a wide currency in debates about the unemployed in recent years. One of the beauties of the term for some is its imprecision and it can be used to write people off as hopeless, idle, feckless, escapist and imbued with an alternative (and undesirable) set of social and moral values. Others such as David Rose argue a more positive need to include the term in classifications of social class because 'It should lead to an improved understanding of how people's jobs – or lack of a job – affect their life chances and those of their children and dependants.' (1997)

Charles Murray writing in the *Sunday Times* (26/11/89) described it thus

'it is characterised by drugs, casual violence, petty crime, illegitimate children, homelessness, work avoidance, and contempt for conventional values. The underclass spawns illegitimate parents without a care for tomorrow and feeds on a crime rate which rivals the United States in property offences'

Ralf Dahrendorf (*New Statesman* 8/5/92) describes the underclass as,

'a cancer which eats away at the texture of societies and metastases in ways which can increasingly be felt in all their parts. Members of the under-class tend to have a low level of educational attainment; many have not finished school; incomplete families are the rule rather than the exception. Housing conditions for the underclass are usually miserable; to some extent this class is an inner-city phenomenon. Crime is one of the modes of life of the under-class'

Michael Portillo, then Chief Treasury Secretary in a speech in Fife (*The Guardian* 23/4/94) blaming widespread violence, family disintegration, urban decay on the underclass of 'yobbos and feckless' locates the blame with the welfare state

'the scope of government has vastly increased. The safety-net has become thicker, higher and wider. Help from government has become widely available with scant regard to whether the recipients have behaved reasonably or unreasonably, responsibly or irresponsibly. As a result the penalties for fecklessness have been diminished and the rewards for personal responsibility devalued. The natural organisations for giving help and support are the family and the community.'

'Benefits in Sweden and Germany are normally income-related and based on insurance principles; they are higher than in Britain and paid for much longer periods of time. However, there is more official concern about benefit abuse and dependence in Britain...'
Joseph Rowntree Foundation,
Social Policy Research 127,
August 1997

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

40

NOT SO MUCH AN UNDERCLASS, MORE THE EXCLUDED

While many agree that increasing numbers of people today are living in poverty, experiencing strains on family and relationships, are more likely to be victims of crime and are obliged to depend on their living from the state, not all agree with the above definitions of the 'underclass'.

Ruth Lister, of the Child Poverty Action Group (1990), suggests that...

'the use of a concept so imprecise, emotive and value-laden could serve simply to waken further the poor's claim to citizenship in the eyes of the rest of society... yet there is little evidence to support the thesis that there is an 'underclass' of poor people who reject the values and aspirations of society at large.'

Anthony Heath (1993) conducted a study amongst people living on state benefits looking at their attitudes towards work, family life and politics. He found little difference between the values of his sample and mainstream values, except that the sample placed higher value on family life. He concluded.

'All we can say with confidence is that the data available to us fail to confirm the notion of the culture of dependency... It would therefore be quite wrong to talk of a culture of non-participation. This is perhaps the most important lesson of this research'.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WHAT ABOUT THE SUPERCLASS?

Martin Woollacott in a newspaper article (*The Guardian* 27/5/95) talks about

'a "new culture" amongst employers throughout Europe which means that they treat workers 'as they would not have dreamed of ten years ago'.

This cultural shift, he argues, makes trying to tackle unemployment and workers' rights much harder because employers who don't go along with the new approach cannot compete.

DISCUSSION

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the term 'the underclass'?

2. Would you have any reservations in using the term?

3. What do you think of the views of the different people mentioned here?

4. Do unemployed people – or people dependent on benefits – have different values from other people?

5. Do you think groups like lone parents are causing problems of crime, falling educational standards, drug-taking and divorce?

Jobseeker's Allowance

Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) took effect from 7 October 1996. The then Conservative government estimated savings of £180m in 1997/1998.

Changes include:

- entitlement halved to six months
- Income Support rates adopted which means benefit cuts for single people and couples without dependent children
- all claimants applying for benefit for an adult dependant being means-tested
- occupational and personal pensions taken into account – so all benefit might be lost
- all claimants complying with a strict Jobseeker's Agreement – with sanctions for non-compliance with instructions

(*Working Brief*, April 1996)

What do you think are the intended or unintended effects on the following?

The registered unemployed

The unregistered unemployed

People in low paid work

Working partners of people who become unemployed

People active in trade unions

Social Security staff dealing with claimants

Employers

People wanting to leave jobs

The unemployment figures

Welfare to Work

– the solution to unemployment and poverty?

Write your ideas in the following boxes…

The current bill for Social Security in Britain is £100bn a year
Social Trends, 1997

At which groups is Welfare to Work targeted?

Why has it been introduced?

CARROTS
How are governments encouraging people back to work?

STICKS
How are governments forcing people back to work – or to cease claiming benefits?

Arguments FOR Welfare to Work

- The Social Security bill is too high
- Dependency on the state weakens initiative
- Dependency is passed on from one generation to the next
- Being out of work should be made uncomfortable to encourage people to take jobs

CAN YOU THINK OF MORE?

Arguments AGAINST Welfare to Work

- Governments need to create jobs, especially in certain regions
- Some groups returning to work may simply take jobs from other people
- Lack of quality childcare stops many from working
- Unless quality training is provided people would remain in the poverty trap
- People out of work will suffer stigma and prejudice

CAN YOU THINK OF MORE?

DISCUSSION

1. The Beveridge Report (1942) which introduced the welfare state in Britain declared: 'It is first and foremost a plan of insurance – of giving in return for contributions up to subsistence level as of right and without means test so that individuals may build freely on it.' p.7. How does this approach compare with welfare to work?

2. Beveridge goes on to say:
   'The government should not feel that by paying doles it can avoid the major responsibility of seeing that unemployment and disease are reduced to a minimum. The place for direct expenditure and organisation by the state is maintaining employment of the labour and other productive sources of the country and ... not in patching an incomplete scheme of insurance.'

   What do you understand this to mean? What are your views on it? How does this approach differ from the one we see today?

3. Do you think lone parents or disabled people should be encouraged back to work?

4. Do you think Welfare to Work will solve the jobs problem?

5. Do you think Welfare to Work will solve the poverty problem?

6. How would you reduce the £100bn Social Security bill?

Mental health consequences of unemployment

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS

1. Most research has concentrated on psychological well-being and examined the psychological stages that many unemployed people go through. These stages, an initial period of denial, a period of pessimism followed by bitterness and hopelessness have been likened to those described in the person who has experienced major loss, for example the death of a spouse…the problem with unemployment is that people are not supposed to learn to accept it and 'recover' from the experience of loss. This produces the risk of prolonged stress with its implications for physical and mental health.
[Office of Health Economics, Jane Griffin, July 1993]

2. Those who most want a job suffer most without one. This may explain why the impact on age groups differs. Middle-aged people who often have heavy financial commitments and other responsibilities tend to suffer more than either younger or older age groups.
[Jane Griffin, July 1993]

3. In developed countries there is a strong correlation between physical health and the distribution of income; this is because the psychological implications of living in deprived circumstances and feeling excluded from what others in society have has a more important impact on health than the mere lack of material things.
[Glyn and Miliband, 1994]

4. Research from the 1930s presents of similar picture to that of today; women then also felt unemployment as a serious blow on social and financial grounds; wives suffered serious health and mental problems; children experienced anxiety, more infectious illnesses and exhibited more delinquent behaviour; they also experienced more violence from unemployed men.
[Eisenberg and Lazersfeld, 1938]

What policies do you think should be enacted to alleviate the suffering evident in these findings?

FACTS

- **in every year since 1977 the unemployment rate in Britain has been positively and significantly correlated with the total suicide rate.**
- **unemployed men were 12-15 times more likely to attempt suicide than employed men; relationships may be the trigger, but the causes of problems in relationships are often related to unemployment.**
- **unemployment may lead to an increase in smoking in working class men which leads to more lung cancer and heart disease.**
- **mortality of wives of unemployed men is higher than that of other married women.**
- **GP consultation rates increase by 20% for unemployed women and men**

Jane Griffin OHE July 1993

Unemployment historically – whose problem?

Unemployment has long been considered a problem in Britain where since the 14th century people have been selling their labour for wages. It has more recently developed recognition as a global problem. The term 'unemployment' itself was only introduced into the language of official debate in England in 1888, though radical writing referred to it in the 1820s and 1830s.

The state has rarely and only partially recognised it as a problem for the unemployed themselves. It has more often been seen as a problem for the state both in terms of cost and labour discipline. In the 15th century large sections of the population were called the 'able-bodied' poor and if caught begging, could be branded with a 'v' for vagrant. In the 16th century Poor Laws introduced a distinction between 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor, the latter were to be encouraged by various means into self-sufficiency. Benefit requirements today reflect these distinctions with those failing to meet them denied relief.

In the 19th century the new Poor Law Amendment Act was introduced (1834), leading to the introduction of workhouses and labour camps in Britain and forced transportation to the colonies, all attempts to deflect claims on the public purse.

Scientists, doctors and politicians developed theories which argued that the underclass were threatening the quality of the racial stock in Britain highlighted by the poor health of recruits for the Boer War. The eugenics movement allowed people to be labelled morons, cretins or degenerates and forced sterilisation took place for some women. Unmarried mothers can still be found, now old, in mental hospitals, incarcerated decades ago.

More honourably, attempts have been made through legislation and reform to challenge unemployment and to highlight the human consequences of the free market and random voluntary provision. Also, there have been efforts to introduce state policies of full employment, a minimum wage and the 'right' of people who are unemployed to be provided with education, training and an income through the state benefit system.

Unemployment is now regarded as a worldwide problem. As capitalism became a world system, waged labour has been replacing self-sufficiency and barter, leaving people without recourse if employment disappears. In the majority of developing countries there are no welfare benefits for those out of paid work and cuts in public services due to increasing debt make the problems of poverty greater.

'Whose problem?' is again a key question. One feature of the 1980s and 1990s was a growing number of movements in the South which look to the initiatives and analyses of local communities for action to challenge poverty and unemployment. (*New Internationalist*, November 1996)

ACTIVITY

Discuss in small groups:

1 For what reasons do states fear unemployment? For what reasons might they also welcome it?
2 What measures do states take to discourage claims being made for public funds?
3 How can state intervention be justified to ensure employment or benefits for all?
4 Who knows which are the best measures to remedy unemployment and poverty – the state or the poor themselves?

The European dimension

Fifteen states belong to the European Union. Within these fifteen states there are 20 million people who are registered unemployed. (Ken Coates, *European Labour Forum*, Summer 1996).

These include:

Spain	22%
France	11%
Italy	11%
Denmark	11%

These figures are based on ILO definitions – wanting work and available for work (*Labour Research*, August 1993)

Where unemployment has been brought down this has usually been through the growth of part-time, temporary or casual jobs.

VULNERABLE GROUPS

The most vulnerable groups include young people, people with little education and training, women (the UK is unique in having a higher male rate), older workers, workers in textiles, construction and many manufacturing occupations, rural workers, immigrants and people with disabilities.

What do you think the implications of such high levels of unemployment are for:

Movement towards greater political union

Fascist and racist politics

Monetary union

Inequalities within and between countries

The Social Chapter – workers' rights

Countries from Eastern Europe joining the European Union

Welfare provision and benefit levels

Policies towards the rest of the world

Different views on unemployment in the European Union

In recent years different explanations have been given for high levels of unemployment in Europe. These explanations also offer alternative ideas about what should be done about it. Below are summaries of three different approaches, one from the Conservative Government, a second from the Chairman of the Commission, Jacques Delors, and a third from socialist Euro-MPs.

1. GROWTH, COMPETITIVENESS AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

UK Conservative Government White Paper (1993)

CAUSES OF UNEMPLOYMENT

- European and World recession
- loss of competitiveness by European economies, for instance compared with Pacific rim countries
- cost of social security and health care rising faster then capacity of economies to sustain them
- over regulation of labour markets (e.g. rights at work, pay)
- protectionist measures which reduce scope for free trade

SOLUTIONS

- increased competitiveness through deregulation – legislation hindering flexible work patterns and pay should be removed
- spending on social security should be reformed and restrained
- rules on state subsidies and aids should be strictly applied
- improvements in education and training – with a vocational intention

2. JOBS AND COMPETITIVENESS

White Paper, Jaques Delors (1993)

CAUSES OF UNEMPLOYMENT

- competition and lack of growth in European economies
- structural changes in the economies – a shift away from manufacturing to services
- too much government control of the economy
- technological changes leading to jobless growth

SOLUTIONS

- public intervention to encourage industrial competitiveness
- promotion of research and development
- encouragement of industrial co-operation – including with trade unions
- an integrated programme for small and medium businesses
- reduction of fluctuations in the exchange rates (leading to European Monetary union)
- job creation by ensuring social protection and conditions of service for those on shorter hours; allowing social security to top up (within limits) income from work

DISCUSSION

1. Who would benefit and who would lose from these suggested changes?

2. What problems would arise in implementing each of these sets of solutions?

3. Which strategy do you think would be most effective in reducing unemployment?

3. EUROPEAN LABOUR FORUM – A GROUP OF THE PARTY OF EUROPEAN LABOUR MP'S

CAUSES OF UNEMPLOYMENT

- greater freedom for Transnational Corporations (TNCs) to operate globally (especially since the collapse of communism)
- the capacity of new technologies to produce goods far beyond the means of people to consume them due to widening inequalities
- increasing investment globally in new technologies which create mass unemployment and reduced demand for goods
- widening gap between Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs) and developing countries – collapse of primary product prices and debt, plus an overall lack of economic stability
- deregulation to create more flexible working practices

SOLUTIONS

- the reduction of working hours (in Britain alone, 80 million overtime hours are worked, equivalent to 2 million jobs)
- debts of developing countries to be written off
- minimum and maximum wages; greater social protection
- collective action to bring TNCs within the scope of agreed social and political objectives.

SOURCES

Growth, Competitiveness and Employment in the European Community, Department of Employment, H.M. Treasury 30/7/93

Background Report: White Paper: *Growth, Competitiveness, Employment*, Jaques Delors 10/12/93. Commission of the European Communities, Jean Monnet House, 8 Storey's Gate, London SW1P 3A

Michael Barrett Brown, *Why all this unemployment* – Review of the European Commission Papers in European Labour Forum, Summer 1994

Unemployment in central and eastern Europe

PRIOR TO THE REFORM PROCESS

Eastern European countries are diverse geographically, historically and socially. However, they shared a number of similar features prior to the collapse of communism from 1989:

- production and employment was geared to heavy industry and manufacturing
- most of this was organised in large, inefficient and environmentally damaging state enterprises with 'over-manning'
- the state decided levels of wages and prices; repressed inflation took the form of shortages
- apart from Hungary and Poland there was no market sector
- they were all locked into COMECON, the trade system dominated by the USSR
- after relatively high growth in the 1970s they all experienced low growth in the 1980s especially in the years before, 1989; accumulated foreign debt; in order to borrow from the IMF and the World Bank, countries have had to make internal changes bearing similarity to the structural adjustment programmes required of developing countries

HOWEVER INEFFICIENT THIS ALL WAS, IN CAPITALIST TERMS THERE WERE ADVANTAGES:-

- there was very little unemployment (though considerable under-employment)
- women were employed in high numbers
- wages differentials were much less wide except for the elite
- basics such as rent, heating, travel, child care, were all very cheap

THE REFORM PROCESS

In all the countries of Eastern Europe the changes since 1989 have consisted of:-

- the removal of controls on prices
- a liberalisation of foreign trade
- the relaxation of restrictions of direct investment from abroad
- sale of state property and land to investors
- modification of welfare systems to provide basic social protection
- a relaxation of controls on employment i.e. deregulation and flexibility
- the privatisation of large companies usually after their breaking up into smaller units – this will take some time
- encouragement of smaller firms

THIS IS LEADING TO

- a reduction of trade between Central and Eastern European countries
- reduced exports and imports
- problems with producing goods that are competitive in Western Europe and do not face quotas
- fiscal controls to contain inflation, thus reducing internal demand
- fall in real income for many of the populations
- rising unemployment – especially for women
- fewer tax receipts hence less welfare provision e.g. closing of nurseries
- market prices for basics and rent
- growth of a black market and organised crime

ACTIVITIES

1. Construct a list of the strengths and weaknesses of the political and economic systems of Central and Eastern Europe prior to 1989. Then construct a list for post-1989. Who benefits and who loses in each case?

2. What problems do Eastern European countries face today?

3. What are the similarities and differences in the experiences of Central and Eastern European countries, the increasingly deregulated economies of Western Europe and Structural Adjustment Programmes facing developing countries?

4. What are the education and training issues in countries of East and Central Europe relating to the growing unemployment throughout the region?

5. Why are women facing particular problems as unemployment increases in each of the countries of East and Central Europe?

6. What are the pros and cons of joining the EU for countries of Central and Eastern Europe?

Unemployment and poverty in developing countries

FIGURES

Estimating the numbers of people unemployed in developing countries is difficult. This is because records are not necessarily kept, or accurately kept. It is also because figures describe the absence of paid work and many people return to the countryside or become part of a more informal economy of petty trading.

The United Nations Development Programme in its conference in Stockholm in 1994 found 800 million people in developing countries to be unemployed but this is clearly an underestimate.

COLONIALISM

Unemployment is best understood in the wider context of poverty. Colonial expansion in the past was in the interests of the colonising countries. Many economies were limited and distorted by restrictions from the colonising nations. Wealth and the best land were grabbed and remain today in the hands of a few.

Independence has not been a simple answer. This is partly because of the power of the richer countries and transnational corporations in shaping the world economy.

In 1973 and 1979 the oil-producing countries (OPEC) increased oil prices fourfold. These increases had the effect of reducing demand for commodities and, through the banks, encouraging borrowing by developing countries. Both of these factors have led to serious debt and poverty.

STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT

The World Bank and International Monetary Fund will lend money to help out, but only if countries restructure their economies. This includes Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) which mean public spending cuts and the encouragement of privatisation and deregulatory measures. The poor are hurt the most by these policies.

- The World Health Organisation states that the cholera 1993 epidemic in Latin America was directly related to the impact of SAPs.

- The number of women dying in childbirth in Harare doubled in the first year of Zimbabwe's SAPs.

- Since the introduction of a SAP in Bolivia in 1985, 35,000 jobs have been lost in factories as a result of trade liberalisation.

- In 1993/4 UK taxpayers paid £239 million to the IMF and World Bank (i.e. 13% of the annual aid budget) of which around 25% was spent on Structural Adjustment Programmes (*Who runs the world campaign?* Christian Aid, 1995)

- Matron Roslyn Flash has been at Victoria Jubilee (a hospital in Jamaica) for thirty years. 'I have never seen things so bad...'
'The cuts in the health service have come at just the wrong time. As farmers produce for export there is less food available for local people. And as nutritional standards have fallen, health problems have increased. According to a 1985 study, nearly 15% of children under 5 suffer from malnutrition. The result? Measles and previously eradicated diseases like malaria and typhoid have bounced back putting more pressure on the system and the nation's Mammas.
Education is in the same boat. It's hard for children to concentrate and learn when there is no food in their stomachs.'
Joan Ross Frankson *New Internationalist* December 1990

Young people

The situation for young people is particularly serious. A lack of education, poverty and drought all work against young people's chances. Oxfam supports a youth unemployment programme in the township, Chitungwisa, near Harare, Zimbabwe called Chiysap. In this township of one million, 70% of people under 35 are without paid work. Below, some of them talk.

'It pains me when I think of my future for it does not have a foundation. My life is a mockery. I cannot be employed anywhere in this town because I do not have any qualifications. My parents failed to send me to school because of poverty. I wanted to go to school but it was just a wish. I get disturbed when I think that I will never be able to look after myself as a grown-up. My parents are small farmers in the village. Their cattle died because of the drought. This question is always in my mind. Was I born to suffer?'

Thelma J. Mukundwa

'Zimbabwe is facing an unbearable problem of unemployment especially amongst youths. The population explosion and the introduction of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programmes together with the devastating drought (1991-5) caused an unfavourable atmosphere both socially and economically.

The consequences of these problems are that youths become either alcoholics, drug addicts, prostitutes or robbers in order to meet their daily needs such as paying the house rent and buying food. All their dreams and aspirations are shattered. They have no hope of living. This can lead to suicide, mental illness or rebellion against society.'

Edson Muchechesi

'For a long time I have been looking for a job. My parents always curse me. I think they don't even understand that these days jobs are hard to come by. Sometimes we go without food. One day a man approached me and asked me to marry him. The situation at home nearly made me accept his request. It is extremely hard for me to be a mother at 15. Our only hope is to stick together and act collectively.'

Dorothy Kamanda

Chiysap, P.O. Box 2G 177, Zengeza, Chitungwisa, Zimbabwe.

DISCUSSION 1

1. What reasons do the young people give for their situation?

2. What are the different responses by young people to their predicament?

3. What needs do these young people have? How might they be met?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

HITTING BACK

Oxfam supported campaigning in Zimbabwe to remove fees which SAP had imposed for health care; they now plan a campaign to remove school fees.

Christian Aid has launched a 'Who runs the world campaign?' In Brazil they have organised a project with 15,000 families forming co-operatives and offering training so that alternative ways of feeding families are found other than through large-scale, export oriented industries.

In Jamaica, the Bureau of Women's Affairs helped housemaids form a trade union. Women in the Free Trade Zone (where large multinationals run factories unhindered by trades unions and wages legislation) have demonstrated, forcing the government to look at their conditions. Sixty women's groups have formed an umbrella organisation for greater strength.

DISCUSSION 2

1. What are the similarities and differences between SAPs in developing countries and the restructuring of the economy and welfare in richer countries?

2. Who, in both cases, are the most vulnerable and why?

3. What are the needs of poorer people in developing countries and what strategies do they need for them to be met?

For campaigning materials contact:-
Christian Aid – London. P.O.Box 100, London SE1 7RT.
Oxfam – Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7DZ.

REFERENCES

Barrett-Brown, M. (1995), *By Their Deeds ye shall know them*, European Labour Forum New Year

Barrett-Brown, M. (Summer 1994), *Why all this unemployment* – Review of European Commission Papers, European Labour Forum

Beveridge, William (1942), *Social Insurance and Allied Services*, H.M.S.O.

Bevins, A. & Nelson, D. (12/2/95), 'Blacks stranded at the back of Jobs Queue', *Observer*

Briefing (1994), Unemployment Unit (Spring 1994)

Campbell, B. (1986), *Wigan Pier Revisited*

Christian Aid (1995), *Who runs the world campaign*

Commission of the European Communities (1992), *Employment in Europe*

Dahrendorf, R. (1992), 'The Erosion of Citizenship and the consequences for all', *New Statesman* (8/5/92)

Delors, J. (1993), Summary: *Growth, Competitiveness & Employment*

Department of Employment (1993), *Growth, Competitiveness & Employment in Europe*, H.M. Treasury

Eisenberg, P. & Lazersfeld, P. (1938), 'The Psychological Effects of Unemployment', *Psychology Bulletin* 35

Finn, D. (1987), *Training without jobs*, Macmillan

Glyn A. & Miliband D. (1994), *Paying for Inequality*

Griffin, J. (1993), *Unemployment & Health*, Office of Health Economics

Heath, A. (1992), 'The Attitudes of the Underclass', in Ed David J. Smith *Understanding the Underclass*, Policy Study Institute

Hughes, J. (1995), 'Young Workers in a deregulated economy' in Ed. K. Coates

Institute of Race Relations (1994), *The Right to Work*, Spokesman

Lister, R. (1991), *The Exclusive Society – Citizenship and the Poor*

Murray, C. (1989), *The Sunday Times* (26/11/89)

Portillo, M. (1994), Quoted in an article by P. Wintour, Portillo lays into yobs and feckless, *The Guardian* (23/4/94)

Regional Trends (1996)

Rose, David, Economic and Social Research Council (1997), *Constructing Classes*, Essex University

Ross, Frankson, J. (1990), *New International an audit* (12/1990)

Social Trends (1997)

Webb, J. (1995), 'Unemployment and Crime', in Ed. Coates Op. Cit.

Wells, John (1995), 'Crime and unemployment', in *The Right to Work – the loss of our first freedom*, Ed. K. Coates, Spokesman

Wilkinson, R. (1993), 'Wealth re-distribution and Growth', in Ed. A. Glyn & D. Miliband

Woollacott, M. *The Guardian*. (27/5/95)

Working Brief (November 1997)

3

Communication and democracy

Clear communication and democracy 51 *Brainstorming* 52
Getting reading 53 *Recording information* 55
Enjoying writing 58 *Letters* 60 *Clear language, clear thinking* 61
Critical thinking 63 *Watch your language* 65
Tabloid language 66 *Listening to each other* 68
Being 'ad by the Ads 69 *Communicating through cartoons* 70
Analysing visual images 71 *Surfing the Net* 72
Doing a presentation 73

INTRODUCTION

At the core of any democratic organisation or society is clear communication. In Britain today, perhaps as never before, we are assailed with sensational, euphemistic, bureaucratic, manipulative language, language which often seems to have expelled all original thought, dubious reasoning, batteries of information and little knowledge. We are also confronted with still and moving images and representations too often associated with selling, marketing.

For many people communication is all too often something to be dreaded with the call to the DSS or the brown envelope falling through the letterbox. Or else it is stultifying. The only written expression is filling in forms or job applications or struggling with letters of complaint or to elicit clarification from various bodies.

Language and the coded images of visual representations help shape our reality and it is generally the powerful who create the labels and negative images that people struggle with or attempt to resist – unemployed, underclass, workshy, feckless, scroungers, single mother – or create the language and images of 'Modern Times' with its metaphors of fitness, leanness and thrust.

Looking at communication issues is inherently political. Empowering people individually and collectively involves breaking barriers to self-expression. It also involves considering the ways in which language is used by powerful groups like business, media, politicians, professionals, to intimidate, confuse, obfuscate, to ideologically shape discourses in ways that present a partial if not wholly constructed reality.

This chapter includes activities which aim to encourage people both individually and collectively to become more critically aware of devices used to persuade, confuse and conceal. It also aims to develop people's confidence and skills in communicating with each other as well as communicating ideas in public forums.

Clear communication and democracy

A democratic society or community has at its core clear communication. Without this people cannot explain their views, articulate their wants or challenge dubious beliefs. The free flow of information in straightforward language is also a requirement for democracy both from government and through the media.

In small groups answer the following questions both from your own individual point of view and more broadly.

WHAT DOES CLEAR COMMUNICATION INVOLVE?

HOW DO PEOPLE (E.G. POLITICIANS, MEDIA, ADVERTISERS) USE COMMUNICATION IN WAYS THAT MANIPULATE FEELINGS, CONFUSE OR MISREPRESENT?

WHAT ARE THE WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN CHALLENGE THIS?

Brainstorming

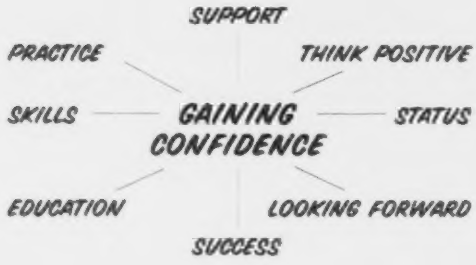
It is so often the case that when you think about writing something the mind just freezes and the thoughts completely ebb away, leaving you staring at a blank sheet of paper. Brainstorming is an excellent way to encourage the mind to start the flow, make the connections and focus on the task at hand. You can use it as an individual or as a group activity. Occasionally groups have written books using this technique. It can be used whether you want to write a letter, poem, essay, story, report or book. And you can go on using it to continue generating ideas as you go through a piece. The basic idea is that you get the ideas flowing. You don't stop to think – you can do that later. Just get the flashes of connections down.

STEP ONE

Take a clean sheet of paper – or, if you are doing this collectively, use board or flip-chart. Put a heading in the middle – e.g. gaining confidence

STEP TWO

Jot down around the heading any ideas, words, associations, opposites, half thoughts that come into your head – take about five minutes to do this.


SUPPORT
PRACTICE
THINK POSITIVE
SKILLS
GAINING CONFIDENCE
STATUS
EDUCATION
LOOKING FORWARD
SUCCESS

STEP THREE

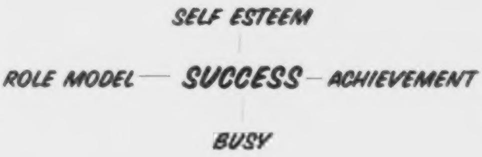
Decide which ideas are useful and cross out the ones you don't wish to keep.

STEP FOUR

Decide how you are going to use these ideas e.g. in what order and with what examples.

STEP FIVE

Take each idea in turn and do another brainstorm in order to generate further ideas.


SELF ESTEEM
ROLE MODEL
SUCCESS
ACHIEVEMENT
BUSY

Getting reading

> **Without reading, the only way you can actually build up any wisdom, if you like, is through experience. So you might be 50 or 60 before you've built up any sort of wisdom from your own experience of life. If you read a book you can accumulate someone's whole lifetime of wisdom in a couple of days. Perhaps that's a bit simplistic but I think it's important to read . . . and go back to things.**
>
> Alan Cook, Ruskin student 1994, quoted by Hilda Kean in Mayo and Thompson (1995)

What do you think about the comment above? In what ways is reading of value to you?

Some people are put off reading because they find it quite difficult. However, it is hard to overestimate how important a skill reading is. Although communication takes place in diverse ways, the production of newspaper, magazines, books, reports, pamphlets, etc., are immensely important and can also provide great pleasure. Having access to the Internet and World-Wide Web also requires reading skills. Developing reading skills is something anyone can do and it can open doors to new interests, new work and more effective self-expression and campaigning.

ACTIVITY 1

Identify the concerns your group has with reading. Write these on a board or flip-chart. Offer each other initial tips for dealing with these.

READING FOR DIFFERENT PURPOSES

ACTIVITY 2

Different types of reading need different approaches. Consider the following and discuss the ways in which you would tackle them.

1. **following a recipe or instructions**
2. **finding a phone number**
3. **reading a detective story**
4. **finding a specific date in a history book**
5. **reading a local council report on local employment trends**
6. **studying a book on unemployment**
7. **reading a light magazine**
8. **using a computer program**

There aren't agreed answers to these, but clearly you don't read everything in the same way. Following every word is important when handling instructions, while you are more likely to skip through a light magazine. You might skim through a council report to find out what is in it and scan the phone book to spot the right number.

'HEAVY' READING

The sort of reading that people often have anxieties about involves dense text, small print and large numbers of words. This might include serious non-fiction works, articles or reports. The following exercise can help you feel more in control of larger works such as articles or books.

ACTIVITY

The following exercise should help you to tackle more difficult pieces of writing.

TITLE ____________________

AUTHOR/EDITOR ____________________

PUBLISHER ____________________

DATE OF FIRST PUBLICATION ________

AND THIS ONE ____________________

When you have filled in the above, consider the following:

- **skim through the book/report/article – find your general way around it**
- **look for a contents page – an index – titles – headings**
- **read the blurb on the back or introduction**
- **introductions and conclusions summarise the whole work – have a careful look at those**
- **notice how each paragraph is put together – paragraphs contain one main point – this is usually summarised in the first sentence (one way to skim through an article or chapter is to read the first sentences of each paragraph)**
- **beginning words of paragraphs often act as 'signposts' helping you through the argument, e.g. 'however', 'firstly, secondly', 'on the other hand' – look out for these guides**

When you have had ten minutes or so to do this, tell a partner about what you have found out so far and how you achieved this.

ACTIVITIES

1. PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

Your group leader will give you an article cut up into pieces. Working in pairs, see if you can put it back together again.

When you have done this, collectively identify how you went about it.

2. SPOTTING THE ARGUMENT

Pieces of writing in books or newspapers don't usually pretend they are neutral. They are in fact arguing a case. This is particularly 'up front' in newspaper editorials.

Using editorials from papers such as *The Daily Telegraph, The Sun, The Guardian* **see if you can identify:**

- **the case that is being made**
- **the underlying values and attitudes of the newspaper concerned**

3. MOVING THE STORY ALONG

Take a chapter of a fiction book. Consider the following:

- **how important is the first sentence?**
- **how does the story draw you in?**
- **how does it (try to) keep you wanting to read?**
- **does it end in such a way as to make you want to read the next chapter?**

BUILDING A LIBRARY

'Cast offs are often thought to be appropriate to the unemployed and those on low incomes – 'value' food, second-hand clothes, car boot sale bits and pieces. This can be most insulting. However, for me books are different. Second-hand books are actually an efficient use of resources. Foraging around second-hand book shops or record shops I find a great pleasure. I like the idea that someone has read the book before me. I also enjoy taking home a new find, usually for less than a pound. I have quite a big library now, it's an interesting one and it hasn't cost me very much.'

Mike

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Recording information

For many people dealing with solicitors, DSS officials, doctors, administrators and professionals can be daunting, stressful and onerous. It can also leave you feeling small and powerless. One way of dealing with these situations is to ensure that you take from the meeting the most that you can, and that you have a stronger position in dealing with the scenario. Preparing what you want to say and ask, gathering and recording relevant information for use during the meeting and after will give you more confidence and will alter the balance of power in your favour. In a variety of situations it is very useful to be able to record information either for immediate or later use.

GETTING ORGANISED

For these purposes you need to buy a small notepad – spiral-bound allows you to remove unwanted pages more easily. An A4 wide-lined pad is useful for transferring crucial information. You also need a filing system to safely store and possibly transfer crucial information. How you organise this depends on what suits you. Possibilities include:

- A4 folder and A4 paper with dividers (you can make these)
- Box, A-Z filing dividers and cards (again you can make these yourself)
- A series of A4 envelope folders carefully labelled
- A large A4 box – you can use plastic folders within it.

It is worth hunting around to find who sells cheap stationery and sharing packs with others. It is also worth experimenting with different systems of organisation until you find which suits you.

PREPARING FOR A MEETING

If you are going to a meeting of an organisation to which you belong, or with an official, it is worth being well prepared if you want to be taken more seriously. Read carefully any relevant documents. Look for the key points. Use a pencil or highlighter pen to make these (unless there are reasons why you should not). Then jot down as you go along any points you want to make, any points on which you need clarification, and any questions you have.

When you have done this, order your points under relevant headings, e.g.

clarification I need
questions I have
disagreements I have
what I want

Organise your notes so that they are:

brief
in order
numbered
under relevant headings
readable

Make sure you take them to the meeting and don't feel inhibited about using them. It will make you appear very organised and in control.

AT THE MEETING

You may want to record further information at the meeting. Even if you don't, looking poised to do so will usually make the person you are meeting more careful about how they deal with you. Don't scribble down everything they say. You won't be able to do so, particularly as you will also be having a discussion. You don't need to anyway.

- go for the key points
- jot down a few quotes when useful
- use abbreviations – devise your own shorthand
- number points
- use plenty of space
- ask for further clarification if you need it
- date them; note the name of the official; venue, etc.

BACK HOME

It can be important to tidy up your notes as soon as possible. Go through adding and subtracting to make sense. You may then want to write them up more neatly on A4 paper for a record. Use headings, numbered points, plenty of space. Highlighters and coloured pens can make them more usable.

After you have completed this, think carefully about where you will store them for easy retrieval. Taking notes and then losing them or never re-using them is a wasted exercise!

ACTIVITY

Divide into pairs. One person becomes the citizen, the other the council official. Spend ten minutes each preparing for the meeting. Organise your ideas into note form. Then spend ten minutes having the meeting, both taking care to record proceedings briefly. At the end of the meeting, write up your notes in a way that would permit their re-use. Don't forget to include the names and dates.

LOCAL CITIZEN

You have been summoned to a meeting with a Council Official over £300 which you owe in Council Tax. The reasons you have not paid this sum are that you have recently been made redundant from a part-time job and have been preoccupied with the problems this has caused. You have also been having problems with your housing which has taken priority. In addition you have less money to pay the tax and anyway assume that you will now not have to pay the full sum. You also did not realise that such a large sum had accrued!

What you want from the meeting is the Council to investigate whether you actually now owe so much. You also want them to help you reorganise the back payments so that you can cope with your budget.

COUNCIL OFFICIAL

Your job is to try and ensure that people who owe substantial amounts of tax end up paying as much as possible. You therefore want to avoid confrontation. You do however want to retrieve as much money as possible, perhaps by staggering payments. You don't want to take people to court. It's bad publicity and costly. However, in the end you would do that and you need the person who owes you money to understand that.

NOTE-TAKING – Do's and Don'ts

DO'S	DON'TS
Do...	**Don't...**
Be clear **why** you are taking the notes	**Read a book from cover to cover** – be selective
Take trouble to organise **a storage system**	**Copy chunks out of books or articles** – read through a chapter or paragraph (where difficult) and summarise it in your own words
Use **abbreviations** – and develop your own	**Concentrate so hard on taking notes when listening** that you miss half of what is being said! Go for the main points
Record the **source** of your notes	**Lose your notes** – look after them! See above
Use your **own words**	**Leave bits you don't understand**, or gaps in a lecture/TV programme. Ask another student or your tutor afterwards.
Use plenty of **headings and sub-headings**	**Use quotes as a substitute for your own understanding**
Use **quotes** – but sparingly	
Flip through a book looking at contents, index, introduction, conclusion...only make notes on what seems useful.	
Use **coloured pens, highlighters** etc.	
Rework your notes, especially after a talk, lecture or TV programme.	
Leave gaps so you can add more later	
Use your notes – if they are not useful, ask yourself why not and learn from that.	

Enjoying writing

Enjoying writing for many people sounds like a contradiction in terms! Writing is not the most natural medium for everyone, like speaking is. Many seek to avoid doing it altogether. However, if you can get down to it, it's surprising how much easier it gets with some practice.

WHY BOTHER?

- Writing a decent letter will ensure that you are taken more seriously.
- If you want to get on with your education you need to develop your writing skills
- Being able to put your thoughts into writing can be crucial if you are active politically or in the community
- Writing creatively or imaginatively can involve new ways of presenting your ideas, and developing your talents

Can you think of any more reasons?

WHAT ARE THE HURDLES?

ACTIVITY 1

Jot down what hurdles exist for you that stop you writing or developing your writing. Share these with your class or group.

STAGES IN WRITING

The best way to break the 'pain barrier' is often just to do it! There are usually several stages involved in the process of writing. However, in practice these often blur into each other and it can often feel quite a muddly process. Don't let this put you off because it is quite normal!

- jot down any thoughts that come into your head ...it doesn't matter how random or disconnected they seem
- when you have done this – cross out what you don't want; add in anything extra you have thought of
- plan an order in which you wish to make your points
- write a draft...leave it for a while – ask others to
- have a look at it and offer advice
- write the final piece

ACTIVITY 2

Try creating pieces of writing starting with the sentence:

'When I woke up this morning...'

'Suddenly in front of my eyes...'

'If they hadn't gone home...'

HOW TO BRUSH UP ON A PIECE OF WRITING

First versions of writing are often quite rough – this is true even for people who have written all their lives. For this reason it is often a good idea if you use a word-processor to do the first draft on paper.

- read through your piece to make sure it all makes sense.
- read each other's writing and point out areas that need attention – it is very helpful to get a second opinion.
- check for repetitions, inaccuracies, incorrect use of words
- check for tired, dull language, clichés, worn out metaphors – see if you can say it differently
- see if you can make your point more economically
- consider whether you want to add something, develop an idea, clarify something difficult
- think about its shape…does it flow…is it logical… would a different organisation make it clearer?
- check spellings with a dictionary – spell-checkers can make you lazy and you won't identify your mis-spelling patterns that way.

DIFFERENT SORTS OF WRITING

There are many ways of expressing your ideas. These involve different formats, varied uses of and concern for language and a range of tones.

ACTIVITY 3

Imagine you have had a particularly difficult day. The washing machine has flooded, you got a rejection letter for a job you thought was in the bag and your lodger left, owing you rent.

Discuss in small groups how you would write this up in the following different ways:

– in a letter to an ailing grandmother

– in your personal diary

– as a serious poem

– as a comedy sketch

Think about what you would select or embellish on, and what you would leave out. Think also about the tone you would adopt and how you would do this, the structure of the piece of writing and the ways in which you would use language.

Letters

Writing a clear and well-argued letter and knowing how to follow it up can allow your voice to be heard. There is a standard format to a letter.

Ruskin College
Walton Street
Oxford
OX1 2HE
Tel: 01865 554331

The Editor
The Oxford Times
Osney Mead
Oxford
OX1 4ME

24th November 1998

Dear Sir,

I wish to bring to your attention a piece of research conducted by a group to which I belong.

The Changing Directions Group has been investigating the renting of accommodation to claimants. Several of us answered adverts which offered rented rooms. Towards the end of our conversations with the landlords we mentioned that we were in receipt of benefit from the DSS.

At that point in every case the discussion was terminated. The clear impression is that unemployed people face discrimination in the housing market. The days of 'no Irish', 'no blacks' is still with us in the form of 'no unemployed'.

We are also writing to local Councillors, the DSS and the Minister for Housing with our findings.

Yours sincerely,

David Smith

TIPS:

- notice where their address goes and where your address goes
- take care over your layout, leave gaps between paragraphs and a reasonable margin
- avoid chatty language – writing is more formal than saying it
- word-process if you can; otherwise write legibly
- ask others to check it for corrections e.g. spellings
- make sure you use sentences and paragraphs correctly… a sentence should involve one point and sound complete; when you move onto the next stage of the argument change paragraph
- you can also fax letters
- follow it up with a phone call to make sure it arrived – and raise your profile
- always keep a copy
- if it is not printed/answered ring to find out why.

Clear language, clear thinking

George Orwell argues, in his famous essay *Politics and the English Language*, that there is an important connection between using language clearly and precisely and the effective functioning of democracy. He writes that:

'When there is a gap between one's real and declared aims, one turns, as it were, instinctively to use words and exhausted idioms, like a cuttlefish squirting out ink... by using stale metaphors you can save much mental effort at the cost of leaving your meaning vague not only for your reader but yourself.'

In other words if you have something to communicate but do not choose your words carefully your real meanings will get confused or lost. Equally, if you have something to hid or disguise, or you wish to intimidate or impress, then tired, lazy, bureaucratic or jargonistic language can do the trick.

George Orwell devised the rules for clear communication in the following way:

- *never use a metaphor, simile or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print*
- *never use a long word when a short one will do*
- *if it is possible to cut out a word, always cut it out*
- *avoid jargon, scientific words, foreign words if you can*
- *break any of these rules rather than say anything barbarous!*

(Politics and the English Language in *Inside the Whale*, 1957)

ACTIVITY 1

Take each point in turn and discuss why you think Orwell is suggesting this.

What are your own views on these rules?

Who do you find to be the main offenders in using obscuring, glib, bureaucratic or incomprehensible language?

Why do they do it?

Does it matter?

POETRY AND LANGUAGE

Poets are the people who perhaps above all strive for the absolutely right word and the clearest images.

'...the tarnished spoon of your body...'
(*Adultery* by Carol Ann Duffy)

'...the squat pen rests; snug as a gun'
(*Digging* by Seamus Heaney)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ACTIVITY 2

Find a poem with plenty of figures of speech or use the famous speech from Hamlet Act 1 Scene 3:

Polonius:
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stay'd for. There, my blessing with thee.
And these few precepts in thy memory
Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar;
Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them unto thy soul with hoops of steel,
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd courage. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,
Bear't that th'opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.

Begin by asking someone to read it out. Then go through the poem identifying any metaphors or similes. Consider whether these are ones you have heard before or whether they are fresh. What impact do they have for you?

METAPHOR, SIMILE AND IDIOM

A metaphor is a word picture aimed at conjuring a visual image: it can be used to sharpen or obscure perception.

A simile is similar, but compares one thing with another,
e.g. 'my love is like a red red rose' (Robert Burns)

An idiom is a turn of phrase, e.g. contrary to expectations, at a tangent

ACTIVITY 3

Read the speech below by John Blurr MP, marking it in different colours for

- **fresh, clear pieces of prose**
- **metaphors, similes, phrases which sound tired and familiar**

When you have done that, identify the general drift of the speech. Is there anything specific which the speech promises?

'We are the party with values for modern times. With a firm grasp of the issues we will strive to rebuild the nation we love. We'll build firm structures on solid foundations, and raise new hopes like a clear, bright dawn. It is a time of rapid change and shifting sands. We are at a turning point and need new direction, new determination, new solutions. We must embrace the new opportunities of today while binding us to the values of yesterday. Our economy has been in poor health, sick and lingering and we must return it to life. To do this we will refuse to lean on the state but will develop the fighting spirit of our people to meet the challenge. Like tall trees we will stand and meet the storms of the future. Like a ship on a wild sea we will plough a firm path. With all hands on the tiller we will embrace the future.'

ACTIVITY 4

1. Write a political speech which sounds impressive, is rousing but offers not one specific item of real promise. Read these out to the group. Get them to award points out of ten for emptiness and for being rousing!

2. Another way of doing this is to write a collective speech. One person should begin with the first line and pass it on. Each person should add just one line.

3. Find recent Party political manifestos and, using the same questions as above, look critically at the texts.

4. Be aware yourselves when you and others are using tired and worn phrases and ask yourself whether it matters.

Critical thinking

Newspapers, politicians and even we ourselves are very good at making ill-considered statements that don't hold up to much scrutiny. Being able to challenge half-baked ideas or prejudiced assumptions with some precision is very confidence-building and can show up a viewpoint for what it really is.

One way of doing this is to have some tricky questions up your sleeve, such as the following:

For whom?

What's your interest in this?

Compared with when?

Which (young/old etc) people are you talking about?

What evidence do you have?

What do you mean by...?

Who says?

Who paid for the research?

ACTIVITY 1

In pairs, one of you should take a statement from below. The other should challenge it with an appropriate question. The first person should hold their ground while the second continues to find problems with their argument. Do this for a couple of minutes then swap.

Feed back to the group some of the problems you identified in the argument being made.

Young people just don't take responsibility these days

There is no poverty

We should get rid of all nuclear weapons

Unemployment is falling

Teachers and parents are too soft on kids these days

SLOPPY THINKING

A second way of challenging sloppy thinking is by being aware of some of the devices people use in written and verbal communication. Try adding a couple of examples to each.

Generalising from personal experience

'Smoking's OK . . . My gran smoked thirty a day and lived to be ninety.'

Reliance on anecdote

'I wouldn't send your kids to that school. One kid I know got beaten up in the playground.'

Disregard for evidence

'That strike was politically motivated by outsiders coming in and causing trouble.'

Tendency to personalise argument

'I really feel it is wrong to get divorced. I mean, look at that politician who left his wife the other day just because he took a shine to his secretary.'

Unexamined prejudices and assumptions

'Women bosses just don't make sense if you want good work relations.'

No clear thread to argument

'My boss said if I was late again I'd get a warning. I don't think that's fair as I wasn't very late and anyway I think he's just got it in for me.'

Appeals to authority without further evidence

'My wife swears by it.'

Tendency to rely on clichés and well-worn phrases and chunks of speech

'They're all the same, men. You can't trust them further than you'd throw them. Still, I say there's more pebbles on the beach.'

Thinking conventionally

'Girls are so much more considerate than boys and they do work hard. But it's always the boys that have the real spark.'

Sweeping statements and generalisations

'The police are all corrupt.'

ACTIVITY

See how many examples of sloppy thinking you can find in the following:

> **Women really ought to take their domestic lives more seriously. It's obvious that women are instinctively better at caring for children and looking after people. It's in their nature and they should accept it. A programme on the TV last night looked at how it was all down to having particular genes. It's because women are going out to work and doing other things that there's so much delinquency and unemployment. Single parents are the worst. Young girls just get pregnant to get council flats, though my daughter didn't. She thought he was going to marry her. I blame teachers. They used to have discipline in my day. A good hiding never did me any harm. Obviously it's all this loose living that's causing all the crime these days. They should bring back capital punishment.**
>
> **Unemployment is the fault of society. They keep on saying it's to do with individuals being dependent on the state. Well, I know I'd like a job and I can't find one. Obviously it's capitalism to blame. The bosses are just out for quick profits and don't care what low wages are doing to people's lives. Marx was right when he said Capitalism was always falling into states of crisis. What we need is a revolution, but we won't get anything but a sell-out from the Labour Party. Politicians anyway are all the same. They just care about their own ambition. Violence is the only answer.**

Now turn your attention to newspaper articles, speeches, political manifestos, etc.

Watch your language

People who want to foist unpleasant things on you first change the language. These are some examples of words needing careful scrutiny and their more accurate real meanings!

LEAN PRODUCTION
sounds fit and healthy, but really means producing more with fewer workers being employed

SLIMMING DOWN
another 'sleek and fit' metaphor meaning getting rid of workers, especially those in full-time jobs, affecting lots of small businesses in the area, not to mention rates for local government services.

EFFICIENCY SAVINGS
simple…it means cuts!

REDEPLOYMENT
not so common these days…you usually get the push; it means giving you a job you don't want, often on new conditions and being more 'flexible'

FLEXIBILITY
this word has positive overtones – after all who likes to be considered inflexible? For full-time workers this usually means job intensification and longer hours; for many it means casualisation – more part-time and temporary contracts on lower pay with few or no prospects…for the employers it means greater competitiveness and more profits

PERFORMANCE RELATED PAY
this usually means paying the same (or less) for more work; it's also a good way to overpay top managers

DEREGULATION
sounds good – after all, who likes rules and regulations; however, it actually means letting the market rip…and fewer jobs, lower pay, etc., for us

JOB SEEKERS
people who have little hope of finding a job but who will be forced by the state into spending 40 hours a week pretending to look on pain of benefit removal.

ACTIVITY

How would you define the following words or phrases in ways that you consider offer their real meanings?

- **Care in the Community**
- **Human Resource Management**
- **Family Values**
- **Scroungers**
- **New Labour**

You will find plenty of other such words and phrases in newspapers, Training and Enterprise Council publications, Department for Education and Employment publications.

Tabloid language

Reading of national newspapers by social class and gender, 1993-94

Daily newspapers					Percentage reading each paper				
Title	AB	C1	C2	DE	Males	Females	All adults	Readership (millions)	Readers per copy numbers)
The Sun	7	18	29	30	25	19	22	9.9	2.5
Daily Mirror	7	13	22	20	18	14	16	7.1	2.8
Daily Mail	14	13	8	6	10	9	10	4.5	2.5
Daily Express	9	10	8	5	8	7	8	3.5	2.5
The Daily Telegraph	6	6	2	1	7	5	6	2.6	2.6
Daily Star	1	4	7	7	7	3	5	2.2	2.9
Today	3	4	5	3	4	3	4	1.8	3.1
The Guardian	8	3	1	1	3	3	3	1.3	3.4
The Times	8	3	1	1	4	2	3	1.3	2.9
The Independent	6	3	1	1	3	2	2	1.1	3.5
Financial Times	5	2	–	–	2	1	2	0.74	4.2
Any national daily newspaper	61	58	64	59	65	56	60	27.4	–

Social Trends 1995

Readership is defined as the average issue readership and represents the number of people who claim to have read or looked at one or more copies of the given publication

Any national newspaper includes the above newspapers plus the Daily Record, Sporting Life and Racing Post

Millions of people each day read tabloid newspapers. For instance nearly ten million, or 22% of all adults, read *The Sun*. 65% of adults read one or other tabloid. So-called quality newspapers are now producing their own tabloid sections so great is the demand for the accessible format and size.

Their very popularity therefore is good reason why it is important to look more closely at the language that they use. It would be reasonable to consider that a daily dose of one or other tabloid is likely to have a considerable influence on people's ideas.

One way of making sense of the journalistic style of tabloid papers is by looking more closely at the language used. The following terms will help you identify some of the different sorts of language in use:

CLICHÉ: This means a really well-worn chunk of speech that has been heard so often as to be relatively meaningless, e.g. *fighting for his political life*

METAPHOR: This is a word picture, e.g. '*sowing disappointment and reaping failure*', '*axing the railways*', '*gunning for him*', '*at the crossroads*'. You may find that many are around the language of battle/fighting, health and fitness. See if you can find any fresh or new metaphors.

HYPERBOLE: Exaggeration for effect, sensational language, e.g. '*defence supremo Mr. Robertson*'... much tabloid language is in fact hyperbole.

EMOTIONAL APPEAL: A direct appeal to emotions and feelings...'*decent people would reject*' ...'*mother pleas for son's life*'...'*vicious killer*'

SLANG, MATEY,
FAMILIAR LANGUAGE: *booze, tot, granny, Di, mum*

ACTIVITIES

1. Go through one of the tabloids and find examples of each of the sorts of language.

2. Comment on your examples in terms of whether they clarify or obscure the reporting

3. Take one story and re-write it in everyday language. Is it still as interesting?

4. Write your own story using the same sorts of language you've collected earlier.

5. What 'rules' do you think tabloid journalists follow when they are writing?

6. Are men and women written about differently? If so, how does this come across in the language used?

7. Which of the following come closest to your views about the tabloids and can you give reasons?

'the tabloids are an easy, quick way of grabbing the news: it doesn't mean you still believe all you read'

'a lot of people only read papers like the Sun for the sport'

'a number of tabloids are very offensive in the way they treat women, and encourage very damaging attitudes in men'

'some of them are racist and only mention black people in a negative capacity'

'the tabloids' language as well as the selection and briefness of stories mean reading them leaves you little the wiser about the news and actively discourages thinking'

'they're just a bit of fun'

'some are more serious than others'

Listening to each other

It is important to all of us that people take the trouble to listen to our moans, successes, complaints and stories. Without that a sense of mattering or being taken seriously can disappear. Equally, unless we can give people our real attention when they are speaking we are unlikely to hear with any precision what they are saying. The danger is then that we hear what we want to hear, or come away with vague or distorted impressions. We have also probably made it plain to the speaker that our attention was only partial and our interest less than perhaps they hoped for.

'I kept trying to tell him how I was feeling about getting into arrears but he wasn't listening'

'You can talk to the local councillor till you're blue in the face and she makes all the right noises. But you know she's not really bothering.'

ACTIVITY 1

1. What do you think is the value of listening to each other

2. What does it feel like not to be listened to?

3. What can put you off listening to someone?

4. What can be the effects of not being listened to (or listening)?

ACTIVITY 2

Do the following in groups of three

1. Identify the prerequisites and skills needed in listening to each other individually or in a group.
e.g.
- respect for each other
- concentration

2. Identify the benefits of
(a) listening
(b) being listened to
Identify the barriers to listening.

3. How do you know if someone is listening to you? How do you know if someone is not listening to you?

4. Take it in turns in pairs to spend three minutes each in telling each other what you hope to be doing in the future. The third person should observe.
Take it in turns to do this without any interruption. When you have finished the listener should feed back to you what you have said in summary form. The observer should comment on how well they thought the listener was listening.

Have they left anything out?
Did they look as though they were listening? How could you tell?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Being 'ad by the Ads

Advertisements are created to sell products by making us want things we may well never need and need more than we can ever satisfy. Much of this aims psychologically at probing existing anxieties and desires or creating new ones. A great deal of money and highly qualified people are involved in producing the briefest of TV ads or visual display.

All this is quite a challenge for advertisers both with a cut-throat market and a highly sophisticated audience, the latter the result of growing up in environments with continual visual stimulation. Advertisers need to use much more subtle and complex ways of engaging our interest for an audience well versed in the conventions of all the different dramatic genres from romance to stand-up comedy and who have a highly developed visual sense. Going to work on an egg or not forgetting the fruitgums, mum, just won't do. Whether you applaud this or lament it, having a close look can be one way of resisting the influence the adverts can have over us.

ACTIVITY 1
QUESTIONS FOR THE WHOLE GROUP

- **How far do adverts create unmeetable desires? Why do they do this?**
- **In what ways do politicians market themselves? Does this interfere with the democratic process in any way?**
- **A great deal more money is spent on a short advert than the programme it intersects. Why do you think this is?**
- **What is the effect on TV of advertising which cuts through programmes – on many US channels, every five minutes? Does it matter?**

ACTIVITY 2

For this activity you need to videotape a number (six or so) of TV advertisements. Decide what time of day you will cover as this will affect what is presented.

Watch through them twice as a group.

Allocate a couple of adverts to pairs of people. It does not matter if there is duplication.

Run through them again two or three times giving pairs a chance to compare notes after each run.

When each pair has completed their notes they should give a brief account of each to the rest of the group using the headings below.

There are further questions on broader issues for group discussions.

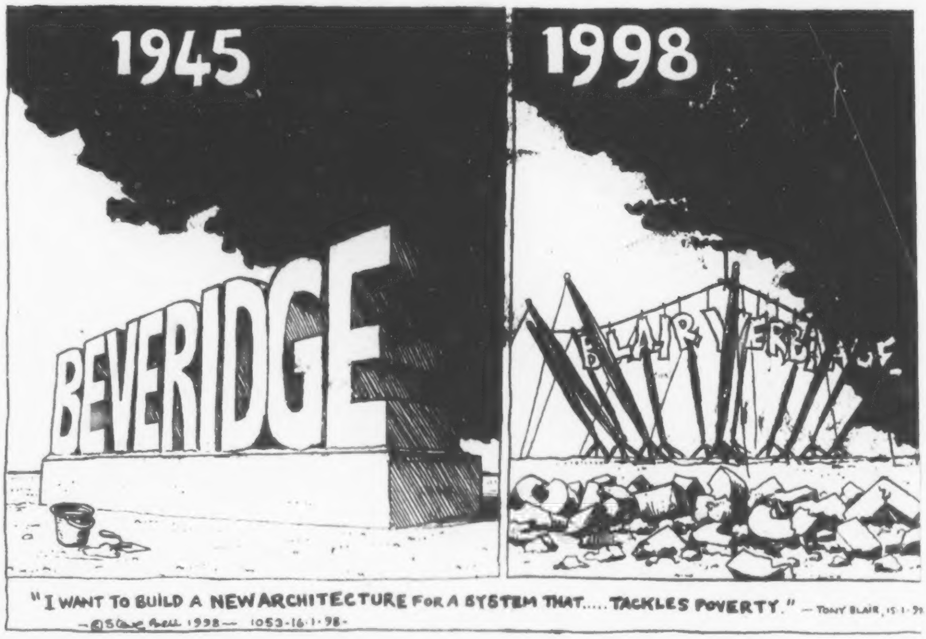
QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What is the product or service being sold?
- Do we realise this immediately? If not, why not?
- How useful or accurate do you think the information is that you are being given?
- What type of approach does it take? e.g. drama, romance, comedy. Is anything or anybody being sent up or satirised?
- Which groups are the adverts aimed at? How do you know?
- How is music used?
- How are men and women represented? Are we offered conventional representations or are these challenged or sent up?
- What devices are being used to encourage people to buy this product or use the service?
- Overall, how good a piece of drama is this advert?

Communication through cartoons

Cartoons can be a very powerful form of political commentary and critique. They offer a message or narrative, usually about a topical event. They entertain and amuse but also scorn and warn.

The cartoon below is a political cartoon by well-known cartoonist Steve Bell (Guardian 16.1.98).


1945
1998
BEVERIDGE
BLAIR VERBIAGE
"I WANT TO BUILD A NEW ARCHITECTURE FOR A SYSTEM THAT..... TACKLES POVERTY." — TONY BLAIR, 15·1·9
—©Steve Bell 1998— 1053-16·1·98-

Steve Bell's cartoon is a critique of the Labour Party's introduction of welfare to work and its spending on the millennium building.

DISCUSSION

- **How do you respond to this cartoon? Does it make you laugh? What sort of laugh is it?**
- **What symbols does it use? What is the cartoon saying – or warning? What political messages does the cartoon convey?**
- **What advantages do cartoons have over written critical commentary?**

FURTHER ACTIVITY
Bring in two cartoons each to the next session and be prepared to present them to the others in your group.

Analysing visual images

Visual images are so much part of our everyday lives that we forget that in the past or in many parts of the world today they are much less so.

TV adverts, newspapers, magazines, marketing, information packs, leaflets and service information confront us daily and include well-considered graphics, photos, cartoons, often interlaced with or supported by written text. The recent shift from information-giving to the marketing of services in the public sector as well as private has added to this volume.

ACTIVITY 2

1. You are part of a marketing company that is asked to create positive images of the following with a probable view to selling goods and services. What sorts of visual images and text would you come up with?

- **older people**
- **motorways**
- **redundancy**

2. You are part of a campaigning organisation that wants to challenge negative stereotypes of the following. How would you go about it?

- **long-term unemployed**
- **lone parents**
- **people with disabilities**

ACTIVITY 1

The questions below should help you analyse images from adverts to DSS publications.

THE VISUALS

- **where is your eye led to in the picture and why?**
- **what has been included in the image; what do these people/objects/colours make you think of?**
- **how are these parts of the image arranged in relation to each other and why?**
- **what sorts of messages is the image generating?**
- **how close to reality is this image? Why?**

THE TEXT

- **what headings are used and what sizes are given to them – why?**
- **where is the text placed and why?**

what does the text say and how does it connect with the visuals?

- **does the text persuade you to see the visual in a particular way?**
- **what doesn't the text say?**

THE READER

- **how would different people relate to this image? e.g. black/white; men/women; young/old; rich/poor; middle class/working class; unemployed/employed.**
- **image creators know that their audience is much more sophisticated these days... how do they deal with this?**
- **how does this image make you feel?**

CRITICISM

- **what does the image or text leave out?**
- **how far does the image reflect conventional attitudes and how far does it challenge them? e.g. women do the shopping; men see their cars as sex symbols; thin women are more successful.**
- **are there any aspects of this image that you feel are playful? Manipulative?**
- **how far do you think this image reflects or creates our ideas about reality?**
- **who benefits from this version of reality being taken seriously?**

Surfing the Net

Information Technology and You

BRIEF HISTORY

1950s	the Pentagon devised a computing system that would not be wiped out in a nuclear attack – by using a network.
1969	The US government developed the precursor of the Internet and turned it over to the US Defense Communications Agency in 1975.
1987	A network was launched catering to academic institutions and military researchers.
1989	The World Wide Web was devised.
1993	Netscape was devised.
1995	The Internet was privatised and turned over to companies like MCI and IBM

VALUE OF I.T.

1. Campaigning groups can have rapid access to each other.
2. Boring jobs can be replaced by machines.
3. Up-to-date information can be accessed.
4. Quality printed materials can be produced cheaply and transmitted.
5. Access to libraries, galleries etc. around the world is possible.
6. Investment can move speedily and unhindered throughout the globe.

CAN YOU ADD TO THIS?

PROBLEMS WITH I.T.

1. Jobs are being lost
2. Information is not the same as education
3. Machines and systems become rapidly obsolete
4. Advertising is a major rationale for World Wide Web
5. Children are less willing to tolerate the hard slog of real learning
6. Information can be stored and accessed on all aspects of our lives

CAN YOU ADD TO THIS?

Discussion

1. How do you see computers affecting work in the future?

2. Should schools spend large proportions of their budgets on computers?

3. How can groups with low access to computers gain more access?

4. Are computers replacing books?

5. How can we challenge the big brother effects of computers on our lives?

See *New Internationalist* December 1996, 'Seduced by Technology'

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Doing a presentation

Some of the most enjoyable sessions of a course involve participants presenting their own pieces of work or giving a talk about interests or hobbies which they may have. The skills developed in the process of doing this are useful for work, education and community involvement. The confidence people can gain too is considerable. It also becomes a way in which students can get to know each other much better. Finally, it can reveal new ideas that can be incorporated into courses in the future.

STAGES IN DEVELOPING A PRESENTATION

CHOOSING A TOPIC

Three golden rules:

1. Select something small and manageable enough. If you take on too much it can be frustrating and there is a danger of avoiding going into it in much depth. If you start small, it is easier for the subject to grow into something you can handle.

2. Choose a topic or interest that you find particularly absorbing or important. This interest will sustain you in your search for information and the writing-up process.

3. Make sure you can get hold of information readily. It isn't worth spending vast amounts of time tracking down information unless you are really willing to do that.

FINDING INFORMATION

- your own experience may be sufficient, but it's usually better to add to that
- use libraries; if you don't know how to use the catalogue ask the librarian
- libraries have indexes of resources e.g. *Books in Print; British Humanities Index*
- they also have statistics e.g. *Social Trends; Office of Population Censuses and Surveys* figures
- collect newspaper and periodical cuttings
- write to voluntary organisations, political parties, charities etc., for free information – libraries have indexes of these
- watch relevant TV programmes and take notes with reference to the name, date and channel of the programme
- undertaking individual research; interview people, visit organisations, etc.

COLLECTING INFORMATION

devise your own system for organising the material you collect; envelope folders or loose leaf folders are useful; postcards are a handy size for filing in a box and recording information.

PLANNING YOUR TALK

ABOVE ALL KEEP YOUR PLAN SIMPLE

- be prepared for it to last about ten minutes
- don't try to load your audience with too much information
- you might want to give them extra information on a handout. A useful format is:

Introduction:

- What I'm going to look at
- Why I am talking about this topic
- Where I'm coming from i.e. my views on this

Main Part:

Choose about three main things to say; you can then elaborate on these, give examples, look at figures etc. Keeping to three main points will help to give your talk a shape...and keep people interested

Conclusions & Recommendations:

Very briefly summarise what you have said and where your argument leads you. At this point you can make recommendations to your audience, e.g. changes you'd like to see, or what they should do if the are interested in your hobby.

You might like to put your three headings on an overhead projector (OHP) acetate, or on a sheet of paper for each person.

You could write out your whole talk in full, but it's often better if you talk from notes

Idea: You could use five postcards for your talk; one for the introduction, three for the main part and one for the conclusion.

GIVING YOUR PRESENTATION

- Choose someone to chair the session
- Be clear roughly how long it will last, e.g. ten minutes for your presentation, twenty minutes for discussion; if you are involving your audience in an activity work out how long it will take.

PRE-DELIVERY CONSIDERATIONS

- Make sure you have any equipment of hand-outs you need in advance: OHP projector, video, board, flip-chart, pens, etc.
- decide how you want people seated: rows? circle? small groups?
- decide how you are going to present yourself: seated? standing?

DELIVERY

- Explain what you are going to talk about; put the title up on a board or flip-chart
- try to speak slowly – we tend to speak faster if nervous
- make sure everyone can hear you
- enjoy yourself!

DISCUSSION

- Such presentations usually lead to a good deal of question asking and discussion; the chair should keep this to the point; you should decide whether to answer questions during the discussion or at the end. You may also like feedback on how it went.

FURTHER ACTIVITIES

1. Design a poster for your group. Consider the message you want to convey and how they might be most clearly received. How might you relate text to visuals?

2. In addition try designing a logo for your group.

3. Graffiti art (despite comments by Jack Straw in August 1995!) can be very imaginative, original and political. In Oxford we have had for many years on one wall, a large dinosaur. People re-paint it when it is fading or when the local authority cleans it off. It states 'he became extinct'. We are also famed for a fifty foot shark which a colourful local resident has protruding from his roof as a comment on environmental and arms issues. Collect examples from your own locality. A successful class we had recently was one where people used basic materials to construct their own graffiti with some wonderful results.

4. Employment services brochures are well worth analysing. Collect a bunch and go through them analysing the language used, the visual images, anything you think they consciously exclude, the reliability of statements, etc.

5. Produce an end of year report from your course showing what you do on your course, including poetry, stories, dialogues. Ensure everyone has something included in it.

6. Video an interesting and topical programme. Ask one person to view it in advance and introduce it. After watching conduct a discussion.

7. Find out if you have a video-making community project and ask a representative to come and speak. You might explore the possibilities for your group making a video.

8. Ask the local radio station to invite you to talk about your course.

9. Your local paper might have an education editor. Invite them to come and meet you.

10. There are many activities you can conduct using newspapers. Compare the different editorial styles. Consider how differently they deal with the same issues. Concentrate on what each paper excludes.

REFERENCES

Bell, S. *The Guardian* 16/1/98

Duffy, Carol Ann (1994), 'Adultery', in *Selected Poems*, Penguin

Heaney, Seamus (1987), 'Digging', in *New Selected Poems 1966-1987*, Faber and Faber

Kean, Hilda (1995), 'Radical Adult Education: The Reader and Self' in Mayo, M. and Thompson, J. *Adult Learning, Critical Intelligence and Social Change*, NIACE

New Internationalist, December 1996 'Seduced by Technology'

Orwell, George (1957), 'Politics and the English Language', in *Inside the Whale and other essays*, Penguin

USEFUL ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

Bell, Judith (1987), *Doing your Research Project*, Open University

Mabeshaw, Mabeshaw and Gibbs (1987), *53 Interesting Ways of Helping your Students to Study*, TES Ltd.

Northledge, Andy (1991), *The Good Study Guide*, Open University

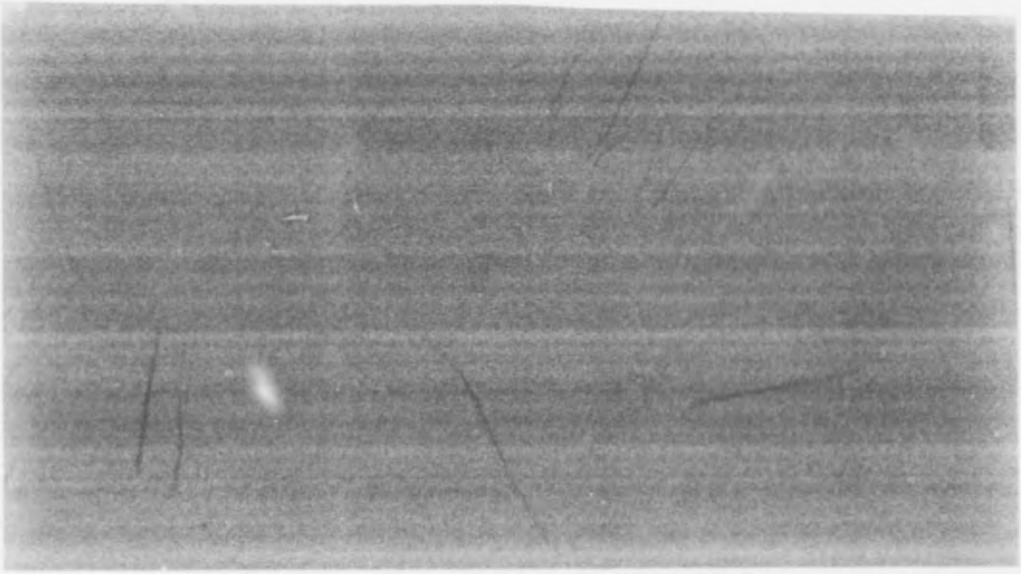
Race, Phil (1992), *53 Interesting Ways to Write Open Learning Materials*, TES Ltd.

Race, Phil (1992), *500 Tips for Students*, Blackwells

4

Facing the figures

What's in a figure? 79 *Questions to ask of statistics* 80
Can you believe this? 81 *Play with percentages* 82
Explaining tables 84 *Average earnings* 85 *The grand parade* 86
Business creativity 88 *Statistics and democracy* 90
Sources of statistics 91



INTRODUCTION

People frequently join courses with an ingrained scepticism about figures and statistics, particularly official figures which are often seen as partial and manipulated. While this is understandable, particularly in relation to the set of figures which people are closest to, the employment figures, it doesn't advance a particularly useful critique or evaluation of statistics, their usefulness or the ways in which they are shaped.

Another common view of statistics is that they represent an objective and scientific account of the universe, a form of unchallengeable truth. The commissioning, gathering, production and dissemination of statistics is, however, as human a process as any other. Statistics pass through human hands and those people who operate them do so in a context of unequal power relationships.

The purpose of introducing some deliberation on ways in which numbers are used is threefold. First it is to increase an awareness of how figures and statistical charts and tables are put together and to demystify some of their usages and related terminology. Second it is to develop a critique of the value of particular presentations, not so that they can all be written off as 'damned lies' but so that in evaluating them, both strengths and weaknesses can be considered. The production of reliable state figures is an important democratic issue.

Third, in view of the anxieties people so often have about figures, the aim is to increase their ability to make sense of them and handle them with some confidence. The confidence to seek out and use the volumes of local, central and European government figures is particularly important on a course that aims to encourage involvement in debates about the future of work and unemployment.

What's in a figure?

What is a statistic?

In your everyday life where do you read about or hear about statistics?

For what reasons do people use them? (e.g. advertisers, local authorities, politicians, voluntary organisations)

Are they all 'damned lies'?

What makes some statistics more reliable than others?

Questions to ask of statistics

Public sector pay increases will be kept to 1.5% again this year

There are 40% more managers in the NHS

By 2000 state pensions will be worth only 15% of average earnings

Crime has doubled since 1970

Who collected these figures? For what purpose?

You say 50% more – but compared with what?

Aren't these incidents under-reported? (e.g. domestic violence, racial attacks

Which average are you using?

But who gets into these figures – and who gets left out?

How big is the sample you are using? Is it representative of the groups you are investigating?

Has the definition been changed?

What is your interest in this?

ACTIVITY

1. Critically consider the statements made in the box above.

2. Find material from *Social Trends* and current daily newspapers. Using these questions, critically assess how valid these statistics are. Consider what other information you would need before making a judgement.

Can you believe this?

Discuss with a partner or in a small group how far you could go along with the following or what additional information you would need to make a judgement.

I come from an average family with 2.4 children

66% of Labour voters think their leader is better

There have been 5% more rapes this year

This College is dreadful – half the students are below average

Hospital waiting lists have been reduced by 9%

Unemployment was only 2.3 million in 1994 compared with 2.8 million in 1992, so it must have gone down

Average wages since I took over this firm have risen to as much as £240 a week

Five out of eight in our sample prefer Pepsi

Our product is now 20% better!

Eight out of ten people think there should be no-strike clauses in public services (Questionnaire in *Daily Express*)

How can you say we are cutting the Health Service? We spend £2 billion more on the NHS than we did five years ago.

Playing with percentages

Statistics are the collection of data in the form of numbers and are often represented as percentages. They are used to measure and record the incidence and patterns of events and experiences. These can then be compared over time or with different regions, social classes, ethnic groups and genders. They can be used to identify relationships between, for instance, unemployment and ill health, social class and dietary patterns. They are important in determining how far experiences are representative or unrepresentative.

The following activities show how percentages are arrived at and the different ways in which they are displayed in official publications.

ACTIVITY

The profile of a company looks like the following:

STAFF	NUMBERS
TOTAL	1732
FULL-TIME	1123
PART-TIME	609
MEN	232
WOMEN	1500
WEEKLY	1547
MONTHLY	185

You will need a calculator for this

- **what percentage of employees are full-time?**
- **what percentage are men?**
- **what percentage are monthly paid?**
- **what percentage are weekly paid?**

WORKING IT OUT

This is what you do to convert numbers into percentages. Call the figure you want to show, A, and the figure you want to show it in relation to, B. For instance A might be the numbers of women in your group – say 8. B would be the numbers of men and women – 22. Women as a percentage of the whole group would be :

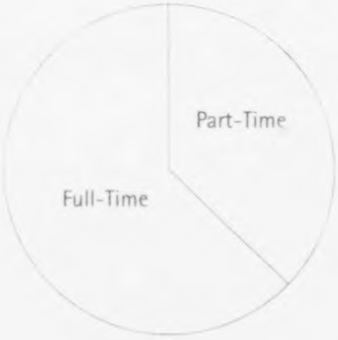
$$\frac{A}{B} \times 100 = \qquad \frac{8}{22} \times 100 =$$

PIE CHARTS, BAR CHARTS AND HISTOGRAMS

Percentages are often visually presented as pie charts and bar charts

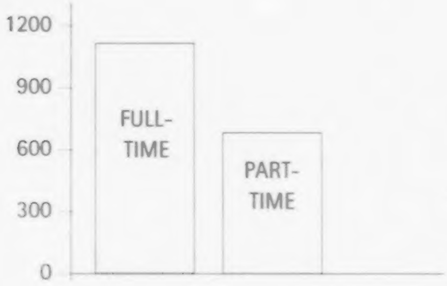
Consider full-time and part-time workers as representative of the segments of a 'pie'.

PIE CHART



...and now in the form of a bar chart

BAR CHART



ACTIVITY 1

In your own group work out the percentage that:

- **are men**
- **have brown eyes**
- **read the *Daily Mirror* or *Times*!**
- **have been on a course before this one**

Then present these as pie charts and bar charts.

ACTIVITY 2

Lay out the following information, firstly as a pie chart and then as a bar chart.

NEWSPAPER READERSHIP

Out of a group of 20, 6 people read the *Sun*, 5 read the *Mirror*, 2 read the *Express*, 3 read the *Mail*, 2 read *The Guardian* and 2 read the *Telegraph*.

SHOE SIZES

In a group of 50, 12 take size 4, 10 take size 5, 18 take size 6, 7 take size 8 and 3 take size 9.

CRIME

In Middletown, reported crime in one year included 78 burglaries, 273 thefts, 56 criminal damage, 35 violence against the person, 16 sexual offences, 5 fraud and forgery.

(Clue...add these together = 463; work out each segment as a proportion e.g. $\frac{273}{463} \times 100 = 58.96\%$)

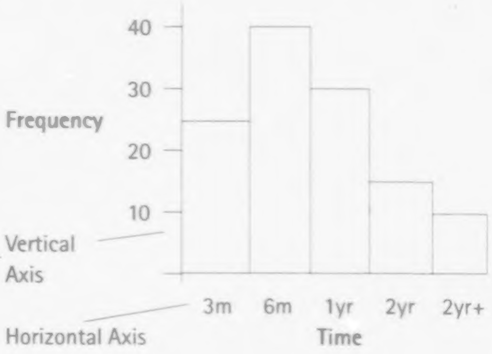
HISTOGRAMS

There is another type of graph which looks similar to the bar-chart and this is called a histogram. This is a graph of frequency distribution.

In a local population, the following total of 120 people have been unemployed for the following amounts of time:

3 months	25
6 months	40
1 year	30
2 years	15
more than 2 years	10

A graph showing this would look as follows...



DISCUSSION

What are the advantages of presenting statistics in these three forms?

How easy would it be to compare, for instance, one year with another or one group with another?

Explaining tables

Much statistical data comes in the form of tables, and many people find these quite daunting because they seem to contain so much information. This is true, and shows how useful statistics are in economically and clearly presenting a great deal of information.

GETTING AROUND A TABLE

Don't be put off! Slowly take note of the detail in the table below. Look at the title. Check the measure. Here the information is in percentages. Check what years are included, in this case along the horizontal axis. Look at the data along the vertical axis. Here it is concerned with different regions. Check where the information comes from.

Answer the following questions:

a) Which four regions have the highest rates of unemployment in 1994?
b) Which has the lowest rate?
c) Which areas have seen the greatest increase since 1990?

Using the data offered to you is of course useful. However, the compilation of these figures is not a simple reflection of reality. It reflects a particular view of reality. Consider the following questions:–

1. How has unemployment been defined? Who gets into the figures?
2. Who does not get into the figures?
3. Do you think the measure might have been changed between 1990 and 1994?
4. The implication of these figures is that the rest of the economically active population is in work. In what ways, though, has work changed since 1990?
5. What further information would you need in order to get a clearer profile of who the unemployed are in different areas?
6. Does the information give you any clues as to why unemployment exists at all? What other information would you need here?

Unemployment rates[1]: by region

Social Trends (1995)

Percentages

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
North	8.6	10.6	11.2	11.2	11.7
Yorkshire & Humberside	6.8	9.1	9.9	9.8	9.8
East Midlands	5.1	7.8	8.7	9.0	8.3
East Anglia	3.8	6.2	7 1	8.3	7.4
South East	3.9	7.4	9.4	10.3	9.6
South West	4.5	7.7	9.1	9.2	7.5
West Midlands	5.9	9.0	1.7	11.6	9.9
North West	75	9.9	10.1	10.9	10.2
Wales	6.6	9.2	8.9	9.5	9.4
Scotland	8.0	9.2	9.5	10.1	9.9
Northern Ireland	13.7	14.1	121	12.5	11.5

[1] Unemployment based on the ILO definition as a percentage of all economically active. At Spring each year

Source: Employment Department

Using further tables from publications such as *Social Trends* apply similar questions to those above.

Average earnings

Question: How many people have above or below average earnings?

Answer: It depends on how you calculate the average.

A **mean** average is calculated by including the income of all income earners (including people on benefits) and dividing this figure by the number of income earners. On this basis $^2/_3$ of income earners have below average incomes.

A **median** average is the point where half of all income earners earn less and half earn more. This would produce the figure of $^1/_2$ earning below average incomes.

The average used for calculating a minimum wage in Britain is the male median full-time earnings. There is much debate about this. For instance some people say 'why not include female rates, which would bring down the average?' People disagree over whether you should include overtime or not. This is one reason why there are different views on what the minimum wage should be.

ACTIVITY

Alongside is a table showing what has happened to income distribution between 1979 and 1991. You might notice that this seems out of date. This is because this table was excluded from *Social Trends* 1995.

What trends in income distribution do you see here? How can you explain these? Do they matter?

If the mean average is the equivalent to the average height of the population, the bottom 20% comprises people who are 2' 10" tall and the top 20% comprises people who are between 7' 8" and 15' 8" tall. Company Chief Executives with a salary of £250,000 will be 60ft high!

Question: Who is the average income earner?

Answer: A lot of people think they are on average earnings who are actually well above. Politicians often describe people who are on £30,000 as 'middle incomes'. They are no such thing! They are in fact in the top 10%. Two-earner couples, both with full-time salaries, are also more likely to be up at the top of the distribution. Calculating income on a household basis, rather than an individual one means that taking outgoings into account pensioner couples with £11,000 are around average and a man, himself on average male earnings but with young children and a dependent wife, are in the middle fifth of the population.

See Joseph Rowntree Foundation *Income and Wealth Survey Vol. 2* (1995)

Distribution of disposable household income

United Kingdom Percentages

	Bottom fifth	Next fifth	Middle fifth	Next fifth	Top fifth	
Net income before Housing costs						
1979	10	14	18	23	35	100
1981	10	14	18	23	36	100
1987	9	13	17	23	39	100
1988-1989	8	12	17	23	40	100
1990-1991	7	12	17	23	41	100
Net income after Housing costs						
1979	10	14	18	23	35	100
1981	9	14	18	23	36	100
1987	8	12	17	23	40	100
1988-1989	7	12	17	23	41	100
1990-1991	6	12	17	23	42	100

Source: Department of Social Security
Social Trends 24, Crown copyright 1994

The grand parade

ACTIVITY

Below are extracts from Jan Penn's famous grand parade. He wrote this in 1971. What changes have taken place between then and now?

You might like to try representing this on graph paper placing the average income midpoint on the vertical axis and marking the horizontal axis for 60 minutes. Compare this with the Income and Wealth Survey pull out version in Vol 2 (1995), Joseph Rowntree. The Rowntree grant parade is based on households, rather than individuals. It comes in five sections, each representing a quintile or fifth of the population. Take a section each or in small groups and comment on the households included. What changes do you note as you move from lower to higher incomes? How is this parade similar to, or different from, the Penn version?

QUESTIONS

Why do some individuals have a higher income than others?

Is it fair that a doctor should earn more than a refuse collector?

...we see tiny gnomes pass by, the size of a matchstick, a cigarette. We think we see among them housewives who have worked a short time for some money, schoolboys with a paper round. It takes perhaps five minutes for them to pass. We should bear in mind that those who have no income and don't want one either - children, non-working housewives - are not taking part in the parade at all.

Suddenly we see an increase by leaps and bounds. The people passing by are still very small ones - about three feet - but they are noticeably taller than their predecessors. They form a mixed group; they include some young people, especially girls who work regularly in factories, but above all people who are not in paid employment: very many old age pensioners without other means of support, some divorced women without alimony, people with a physical handicap. Among them are owners of shops doing poor trade. Unemployed persons also belong to this heterogeneous company, but only in so far as they received a low wage while they were working (otherwise they would be coming later). Some members of this group receive National Assistance. It takes them at least five or six minutes to pass by.

After them - the parade has been going on for about ten minutes - come the ordinary workers about whom there is nothing out of the ordinary except that they are in the lowest paid jobs. Dustmen, Underground ticket collectors, some miners. The unskilled clerks march in front of the unskilled manual workers. Precisely among these lower paid categories each group applies the principle of ladies first - particularly in Britain equal pay is far from being a reality. We now also see large numbers of coloured persons. It takes almost fifteen minutes before the passing marchers reach a height of substantially more than four feet. For you and me this is a disturbing sight; fifteen minutes is a long time to keep seeing small people pass by who barely reach to our midriff. More than a third of them are women, dwarf like human beings. In embarrassment we avert our gaze and look in the direction of the approaching parade to catch sight at long last of normal people.

But a new surprise awaits us here. *We keep on seeing dwarfs.* Of course they gradually become a little taller, but it's a slow process. They include masses of workers, just ordinary people with not inconsiderable technical knowledge, but shorties. After we have waited another ten minutes small people approach who reach to our collar-bones. We see skilled industrial workers, people with considerable training. Office workers, respectable persons so to say. We know that the parade will last an hour, and perhaps we expected that after half-an-hour we would be able to look the marchers straight in the eye, but that is not so. Even in the distance we do not yet see any obvious improvement. The height is growing with tantalizing slowness, and forty-five minutes have gone by before we see people of our own size arriving. To be somewhat more exact: about twelve minutes before the end the average income recipients pass by.

We are of course interested as to who they are. Now, they prove to include teachers, executive class civil servants, clerical workers, older N.C.O.'s. grown grey in the services. Of course we also encounter shopkeepers, together with sales representatives and insurance agents (a number of them do not come along until later). This group also includes people in overalls and rubber boots and with callouses on their hands; there are a number of foremen, superintendents and technicians, and a few farmers.

After the average income recipients have passed, the scene changes rather quickly. The marchers' height grows; six minutes later we see the arrival of the top ten percent, a group that will turn up again repeatedly in the following pages. The first to arrive are around six feet six inches, but to our surprise we see that they are still people with modest jobs. Headmasters, Assistant Principals and Principals. University graduates, but most of them are very young. Small contractors who lend a hand themselves. Seamen too. And once again farmers; in Britain their income is higher than the national average (in this respect this country differs from the United States and from all countries of Continental Europe!). Again office staff, department heads, but certainly not yet genuine top executives. They are people who had never thought that they belonged to the top ten percent.

In the last few minutes giants suddenly loom up. A lawyer, not exceptionally successful: eighteen feet tall. A colonel, also of much the same height. Engineers who work for nationalized industries. the first doctors come into sight, seven to eight yards, the first accountants. There is still one minute to go, and now we see towering fellows. University professors, nine yards, senior officers of large concerns, ten yards, a Permanent Secretary thirteen yards tall, and an even taller High Court judge; a few accountants, eye surgeons and surgeons of twenty yards or more. This category also includes managers of nationalized concerns; the Chairman of the National Coal Board is likewise a good twenty yards.

During the last seconds the scene is dominated by colossal figures: people like tower flats. Most of them prove to be business men, managers of large firms and holders of many directorships, and also film stars and a few members of the Royal Family. To mention a few examples of persons whose salaries have been published: we note, with due respect, Prince Philip, sixty yards, and the senior managing director of Shell, David Barran, who measures more than twice as much.

Now these giants are still people with salaries, and the yard is still a practical measure of their height But the rear of the parade is brought up by a few participants who are measured in miles. They also include women. Indeed, they are figures whose height we cannot even estimate: their heads disappear into the clouds and probably they themselves do not even know how tall they are. The last man, whose back we can still see long after the parade has passed by, is John Paul Getty (though as a rule we have not invited American guests, Getty lives for much of time in Britain and is an Oxford B.A.). At the time of writing he is almost 80 years old and made his money in oil. Few know what he earns (perhaps nobody does); his fortune is estimated at 1,000 to 1,500 million dollars. His height is inconceivable: at least ten miles, and perhaps twice as much.

Adapted from Jan Penn (1971)

Business creativity

Businesses, not unexpectedly, use statistics in ways that present their activities in the best possible light. In dealing with trade unions, employers generosity is highlighted, and union greed condemned. In selling products advertising holds impressive claims for a product's qualities. In encouraging investment, company performance is proudly displayed. The following provide some examples.

EXAMPLE ONE – WAGE GENEROSITY

When it comes to the wages round, employers tend to prefer an across-the-board percentage increase for their employees. Unions who represent low paid workers often prefer a flat rate across the board increase or a combination of the two.

A firm, Thelastounce, offers all its workers a 3% increase. This applies at all levels.

In this firm the bosses earn £450 a week, the supervisors £300 and the workers £100.

Can you work out what they would get?

e.g. $\frac{103}{100} \times 450 =$

The Low Paid Workers Union wants a £6 flat rate increase plus 1%.

Can you work out what each level would get?

What would happen to differentials if:

- you carried on getting percentage increases
- you had flat rate increases

You might like to try it out over 5 years.

EXAMPLE TWO – AVERAGING IT OUT

The firm, Profitbeforepeople, includes the following workers

☺☺ **£50,000**
☺☺☺☺ **£30,000**
☺☺☺☺☺☺ **£20,000**
☺☺☺☺☺☺☺☺ **£7,000**

When talking to the local *Daily Slander*, the managing director explains that his firm pays excellent wages. On average they are £18,210 per person.

What do you think of this figure?

The local Union representative studied the figures and came up with a different figure. He rang the *Slander* and said the average was £7,000.

The economics tutor at the local College was asked for her view and she said they were both wrong. The figure was £20,000.

Who was right?

Well, it depends on what sort of average you use. The boss was using the median average. The union rep. was using the modal average, which goes for the largest group. The tutor went for the median average – the one in the middle.

EXAMPLE THREE – SELLING THE STUFF

'Kills 99% of all known germs'

'Nine out of ten cats prefer Kattoslurp'

'10% of people taking Watoloss reduced their weight by 4lbs in the first week.'

'Sloshandgrow mends 46.5% of your split ends in just two shampoos'

'35% of our sample of Doctors take Koffless when they get a cold.'

Would the above convince you?

Think about . . . which germs? what cats? what is the sample being referred to?

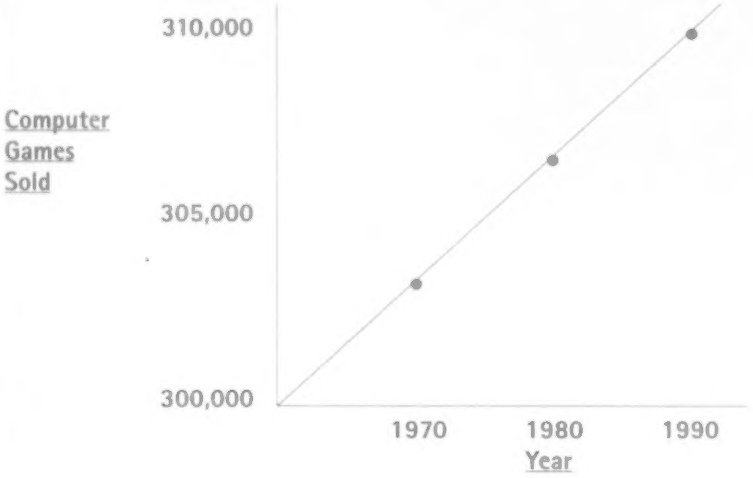
Weight loss in the first week is mostly water and again, we'd need to see the sample used

Split ends cannot be mended – and such a precise figure is a little alarming!

So what if Doctors do take Koffless? It says nothing about the product's effectiveness

EXAMPLE FOUR - THE GEE WHIZZ GRAPH

Gee Whizz! Our sales are up by record levels . . . !



Is this really so miraculous?

Imagine your rivals have experienced a fall in sales of 5,000 games between 1993 when they sold 400,000 and 1995. How might you present this in the worst possible light?

Statistics and democracy

In large and complex societies the use of statistical data to help give a clear picture of social reality is vitally important. Without accurate, transparent and independently produced figures plus a commitment by politicians to ensure these, debates and discussions about society are liable to distortion. Below are a few examples of various challenges to such provision.

- On the Conservatives coming to office in 1979 the standing Commission on the distribution of Income and Wealth was abolished and the General Household Survey – as part of an economy drive – is now carried out only every other year rather than annually.

- Last year, Ministers insisted that a table showing that unemployed people were more vulnerable to illness than those in work was removed from the Central Statistical Office's annual volume *Social Trends* Robert Taylor *The Observer* 3/10/86

- The General Statistical Office lost its independence in 1989.
Dispatches 'Cooking the Books' Channel 4 1/1/89

- Since 1979 there have been more than 30 changes to the unemployment figures. All but one have decreased the numbers of officially unemployed.
Unemployment Unit

- Auditors for the National Audit Office found that as many as one in five job placements made in 1997 could have been faked. In South London new job starters in McDonald's fast food chain in Croydon appeared in job placements in several job centres. 320,000 placements are estimated to have been fiddled.
The Guardian 8/1/98

- 'The philosophy of *Social Trends* had to be fearless faithful and straight', said Sir Claus (Moser). But *Social Trends* has suffered in the 1980s. 'I was only a second hand observer by then, but the reports became more and more cautious and one no longer saw the sensitive issues of the day fearlessly displayed. If it might have offended a few politicians so what?'
The Guardian 21/1/95

- The 1994 table showing the shift in income away from the bottom 20% to the top 20% since 1979 is missing from the 1995 *Social Trends*.

- The British Crime Survey argues that public perception of crime is out of line with reality. Recorded crime has fallen by 8% in recent years while 75% think it has risen. It accuses politicians of distorting public perceptions for political ends.
British Crime Survey (1998)

DISCUSSION

1. What have reliable figures to do with democracy?

2. What can be the effects of governments being 'economical' with the truth? Does it matter?

3. What figures do you think should be more seriously collected and using what definitions?

4. What don't figures tell you?

5. Can you find other examples of unreliable figures or figures given distorted interpretations?

Sources of statistics

MONTHLY DIGEST OF STATISTICS OPCS/
Stationery Office, Central Statistical Office, Room 64a/3 Gt. George St, London SWIP 3AQ – Includes information on production, employment, balance of payments, trade leisure, population.

LABOUR RESEARCH
Independent research unit producing information and statistics on labour movement activity and issues in Britain and Europe. 78, Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HF

UNEMPLOYMENT UNIT
an independent research unit providing detailed studies and figures on every aspect of unemployment in Britain and to some extents, Europe. 322, St. John St, London ECIV 4NT

LOW PAY UNIT
29 Amwell St, London EC1R 1UN Researches all aspects of low pay and is currently campaigning for a minimum wage.

SOCIAL TRENDS OPCS
A yearly compilation of Government figures including employment, health, housing, income and wealth, leisure.

REGIONAL TRENDS OPCS
A similar format to *Social Trends* but concentrates on regional comparisons.

DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT GAZETTE
A monthly publication from the Employment Department covering earnings, workloads, labour market statistics, health and safety and many other topics.

ECONOMIC TRENDS
produced monthly by the CSO room 56/5 St. George Street including output, financial statements, economic accounts, prices etc.

THE TIMES 1000
including the UK top 1000 and Europe's top 1000 firms; 7785 Fulham Palace Road, Hammersmith, London W6 8JB

NEW EARNINGS SURVEY
in six parts yearly, covering wages by occupation, sex, county, age group, full and part-time. Stationery Office, BOX 276, London SW8 5DT

HEALTH AND PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICES STATISTICS
produced yearly by the Dept. of Health, Skipton House, 80, London Rd., Elephant and Castle, London SE1 6TE; includes mortality, fertility, health services, hospitals, AIDS etc.

FAMILY EXPENDITURE SURVEY
produced yearly based on 11,500 private households; looks at expenditure on food, clothes, fuel, alcohol etc. Stationery Office, PO BOX 276

EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS REVIEW
18-20 Highbury Place, London N5 IQP. Considers bargaining, equality at work, training, worker participation etc.

SOCIAL EUROPE
Fax (32-2) 292 23 93 Luxembourg; topic-based information about families, flexibility, work, workplace organisations, etc.

REFERENCES

Huff, Darrell (1974), *How to Lie with Statistics* Pelican
Penn, Jan (1971), *Income Distribution* Penguin
Joseph Rowntree Foundation (1995), *Inquiry into Income and Wealth Vol.2*
Social Trends
Regional Trends

USEFUL ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

Harper (1982), *Statistics for Beginners* Pitman
Reichman, W.J. (1981), *Use and Abuse of Statistics* Pelican
Rowntree, Derek (1981), *Statistics Without Tears* Pelican
TUC (1988), *Working With Figures* Stage 2 Course

5

Culture is ordinary

Culture is ordinary 95
Your cultural interests 96
Education is ordinary 97
Unemployment, critical thinking and democracy 98
Educating Rita 99
Talking about literature 100
Where have all the women gone? 102
Reading for pleasure 104
Taking about films 105
Musical activities 106
Reading short stories 107
Reading poetry 108
Play-reading 110
Arty-fartying about 111

CULTURE IS ORDINARY

or WHAT HAS DYLAN THOMAS GOT TO DO WITH GETTING PEOPLE BACK TO WORK?

NOTES FOR TUTORS

Many courses for the unemployed concentrate on work-seeking skills. It was for this reason that a bid we made to the Training and Enterprise Council locally met with surprise and the question 'What has Dylan Thomas got to do with getting people back to work?' Dylan Thomas had been included in the syllabus.

In many ways a narrow job-seeking and training approach is insufficient for labour market needs. In a technologically superior economy a highly skilled workforce is essential. A failure to understand the wider social and job-related context as well as to be adaptable and communicate effectively in favour of a skills-only training approach is proving to be an economic as well as human disaster. A broad educational base to training is more vital today than ever. Such a base should directly address issues of citizenship. Education should help equip people for all facets of work including the organisation of that work. It should also equip people for community and political involvement and to benefit to the full from their leisure time. It should help people both to understand their everyday lives and to contribute to the creation of and changing of meanings around their daily lives.

In this sense Raymond Williams describes culture as ordinary. He recognises it is often regarded narrowly and even fearfully as of relevance only to a few. However, people have always derived belonging, a sense of community, a stake in shaping their world from cultural involvement.

The narrow view of culture needs to be challenged as elitist and divisive. Music and literature secured or produced by an establishment as a legitimisation of its authority must be reappropriated. Shakespeare never wrote his plays to be studied at Oxbridge or set for GCSE. It is necessary to challenge critically such a tradition too, as narrow, exclusive and essentially white and English. Culture is diverse, varied, and continually evolving. What distinguishes culture that is of value from the cheap and tasteless is not distinction of mass and exclusive, but whether we are made to think, to open our eyes, to question, to learn, to understand.

Including a strong cultural course element does various things. It opens doors to new experiences, learning modes and pleasures. It challenges preconceived ideas, encourages the imagination and self-expression, creates access to other forms of expression and resistance. It also offers alternative ways of thinking about a future where work will become less important as a way of shaping identity and citizenship.

This chapter begins with general discussion material about cultural exclusion. It then moves on to involve participants directly in a range of activities in which they can share their tastes and preferences and also engage directly with different cultural forms.

Culture is ordinary

'Culture is ordinary: that is the first fact. Every human society has its own shape, its own purpose, its own meanings. Every human society expresses these in institutions, in arts and learning. We use the word culture in these two senses: to mean a whole way of life – the common meanings; to mean the arts and learning – the special processes of discovery and creative effort. Some writers reserve the word for one or other of the senses; I insist on both. Culture is ordinary in every society and every mind.'
Raymond Williams *Border Country* (1992) p.4

CHANGING DIRECTIONS AND CULTURE

Culture means how we, in varied and diverse ways, live our lives and give meanings to our lives. It is also about creativity – about art, photography, writing, poetry, music – which we can all enjoy and become involved in. This has all sorts of connections with making changes in ourselves and in society. Culture offers comment on society, insights, community and solidarity, and other ways of connecting with people outside work and as an alternative to unemployment. It is part of shaping and changing directions.

The term culture can be used widely to mean how we live our lives. It can also mean how we creatively engage in commenting on, participating in and forming and changing the meanings that shape the ways in which we live. Sometimes the term culture is used more narrowly, implying that only certain forms of education or contact with particular writers, composers, playwrights and artists mean that a person is 'cultured'. This form of elitism often connects certain forms of culture with social class. It can therefore alienate people from a range of cultural experiences as not being 'for them'. It can also devalue a great deal of working class or ethnic cultural expression.

There is also a market approach to culture which applauds the activities of writers and artists whose works can be successfully sold as products. This does not mean such work is inherently bad. On the contrary, much of so-called mass culture is of high quality. What it can mean, though, is that minority tastes can be marginalised, new artists can find it a serious struggle to gain a foothold and variety and diversity can suffer.

ACTIVITY

Meaning 1:

Culture is how we live our everyday lives. What would you include here?

Meaning 2:

Culture is about the involvement of everyone in understanding society, creating meanings and making changes. What would you include here?

What cultural activities do you get involved in, in the second sense of culture? (getting involved in this course would count as one)

The idea of *culture as ordinary* **contrasts and challenges ideas of culture as exclusive, elitist, only for an educational minority. What are your views on this?**

It also contrasts with a market approach to culture. This approach means: if you can market it then do it. What effects do you think this has on culture?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Your cultural interests

How much and in what ways are any of the following important to you?
Jot down some thoughts under relevant headings and share your ideas in small groups.

Magazines

Poetry/songs

Newspapers

Art/photography

T.V.

Crafts

Films

Computers

Theatre

Education is ordinary

Raymond Williams believed that in order for each member of society to fully participate in its work, politics and culture, they should all have a sufficient level of education to do this.

In pursuit of this argument he made the following statements:

- Education should be about enabling people to understand the society in which they live and help to change it
- We need to get rid of the money restrictions to education
- We need to get rid of the idea that intelligence is restricted to the few
- Education cannot and should not be simply training for work - it must be first for understanding the society from which the jobs arise

ACTIVITY

Divide into four equal groups

Each group take one of the statements

Discuss what you think Williams means by the statement; do you agree or disagree?

How might these ideas be achieved?

Who would be supportive of these ideas and who would be hostile? and why?

I wish, first, that we should recognize that education is ordinary: that it is, before everything else, the process of giving to the ordinary members of society its full common meanings, and the skills that will enable them to amend these meanings, in the light of their personal and common experience. If we start from that, we can get rid of the remaining restrictions, and make the necessary changes. I do not mean only money restrictions, though these, of course, are ridiculous and must go. I mean also restrictions in the mind: the insistence, for example, that there is a hard maximum number – a fraction of the population as a whole capable of really profiting by a university education, or a grammar school education, or by any full course of liberal studies. We are told that this is not a question of what we might personally prefer, but of the hard cold facts of human intelligence, as shown by biology and psychology. I believe, myself, that our educational system, with its golden fractions, is too like our social system – a top layer of leaders, a middle layer of supervisors, a large bottom layer of operatives – to be coincidence. I cannot accept that education is a training for jobs, or for making useful citizens (that is, fitting into this system). It is a society's confirmation of its common meanings, and of the human skills for their amendment. Jobs follow from this confirmation: the purpose, and then the working skill. We are moving into an economy where we shall need many more highly trained specialists. For this precise reason, I ask for a common education that will give our society its cohesion, and prevent it disintegrating into a series of specialist departments, the nation become a firm.

Culture is Ordinary in *Border Country* (1992)
Raymond Williams

Unemployment, critical thinking and democracy

In many parts of the world, the state views people getting together to discuss ideas, politics, dreams and visions as very threatening. Employers are also frequently hostile to collective organisation, criticism, critical ideas. Professionals do not always welcome questions, criticism or alternative viewpoints.

At the root of these anxieties are fears about people with an educated critical imagination. Critical thinkers are more likely to see through bland statements and promises, be aware of systems of power operating behind taken for granted relationships and institutions, and have ideas about better (for them) alternatives. They are also likely to have expectations of a higher quality of life for them and others.

MINISTRY FOR ACCEPTANCE OF THE STATUS QUO

Imagine you and your colleagues within the Ministry for the Acceptance of the Status Quo (MASK) have been set the task of recommending guidelines for developing an accepting population. Under the following headings make recommendations for the development of a passive and uncritical population.

WAYS OF OCCUPYING PEOPLE'S TIME

MAKING PEOPLE THINK TWICE BEFORE SPEAKING UP

PERSUADING THEM THAT CERTAIN HIERARCHIES AND INEQUALITIES ARE NATURAL AND DESIRABLE

KEEPING INFORMATION AWAY FROM PEOPLE

ENCOURAGING UNCRITICAL FORMS OF ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURE

DISCOURAGING INDEPENDENT COLLECTIVE FORMS OF ORGANISATION

ENCOURAGING CONCERN WITH CONSUMPTION, FASHION, ETC

1. How far does a successful economy and a successful democracy need critical thinkers?
2. How might a society encourage critical thinking?
3. What elements of these trends, critical and uncritical, can you see in Britain today?

Educating Rita

what is it that makes adults return to education?

Willy Russell, author of *Educating Rita* and like Rita from a working class background and a hairdresser, says the following about his schooling:-

'I didn't know it then, I didn't know it for years but my experience at school was doomed from day one. It was a largely futile experience because two cultures were in constant conflict. Of course this was very explicit and it was only when I became a teacher myself that I realised that schools assume and reflect middle-class culture with literacy at its heart, whilst kids from working class families are part of a culture which has not literacy but oracy at its heart. Schools try to teach working class kids without addressing the fact that the school speaks with one tongue and the kids speak with another. And implicit in this process is the message that the language of the school is the valid language whilst the language, the working class idiom of the kid is valueless, is base.

Like thousands of others who left school bemused, confused and apparently apathetic, I sensed inside that I was capable. I sensed that I was valuable. But I couldn't prove it? (Hughes, V. 1991)

Russell had a burning desire to become a teacher…

'And then I'd be overwhelmed by doubt and insecurity. Me a teacher? The mere thought was ludicrous. And so, the next morning I'd be back at the perm trolley or the shampoo basin, depressed, frustrated' (Hughes, V. 1991)

Rita, his character says,

'I mean here was always somethin' in me head, tappin' away, Tellin' me I might have got it all wrong. But I'd play another record or buy another dress an' stop worrying. There's always something to make you forget about it… Till one day. Y'own up to yourself an' y' say, is this it? Is this the absolute maximum I can expect from this living lark? An' it's really tempting to go out and get another dress Y'know, it is. Cos it's easy, it doesn't cost anything it doesn't upset anyone around you.' (p.183)

Rita: 'What time have I got for an affair? I'm busy enough finding myself… I don't want anyone else. I've begun to find me – an' it's great Y'know. It might sound selfish but all I want for the time being is what I'm findin' inside me. (p. 197)

DISCUSSION

What is it that drives many adults to get more education?

Are there anxieties involved about 'getting above yourself', leaving others behind, getting out of your class?

Are schools unsympathetic environments for working class children?

Where does the 'doubt and insecurity' come from?

What do you want out of more education?

---

*V. Hughes *Literature Belongs to Everyone*. Arts Council (1991)

105

Talking about literature

The more I think about it, the word literature is a terrible curse of a word in our society. A fine word in its own right of course but saddled with so much baggage that we can hardly see the word for what it is. I mean for example, if I shouted over to my neighbour who's sitting across from me,

'Hey Jac, I've got a great book for you to read', she would immediately be receptive. If, on the other hand I was to shout 'Hey Jac, I've got a great piece of literature for you to read,' she would smile politely and I would see an element of fear in her eyes.'

Willy Russell

Willy Russell joined an evening class in English literature studying George Orwell's *Animal Farm*…

'riddled with fear and uncertainty, the smells common to all educational buildings – making me feel sick with memories of school. It was all a mistake. It was too late for me and I'd better start accepting the fact. And anyway I hated Shakespeare – that's why I'd never read him. And that book about pigs, I mean pigs. Who the hell would write a book about pigs? I'd packed it in after the first three pages. And then there was this teacher – it isn't about pigs at all. Well it is on the surface. But below, it's about the Russian revolution. Oh, so the pigs are like the symbols of people in the revolution? Yes the book is what's known as an allegory. Going home and straight to bed to read right through this great book.'

Jacky Kay, a black and Scottish poet, says…

'Black and working class people at the moment have access to literature only in a stereotyped and unimaginative way. Few of them have the confidence to browse in bookshops of quality, pick out a book and buy it – or even have the money to do that. How many libraries stock books by working class – and black people in the way they stock books like John Le Carre or Danielle Steel? It's the same people who go into the bookshops, and the cinemas, the same educated middle-class people. It's the same at the Poetry Society. Ordinary people feel it's not for them'.

Ron Todd, previous General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union, on a visit to China discovered the poems of Robert Burns…

'And now for thirty years I've had a personal love of Robert Burns. I couldn't understand a word at first. I think I can now claim to have read every word that Burns wrote. I love Burns. We shouldn't be restricted you know…'only eat in this field'. A farm labourer would love to sit and soak up Puccini. It's not meant for people in top hats and silk coats. It's important. We ought to broaden out!'

Margaret Dunn, a UNISON official and miner's daughter remembers discovering Wilfred Owen…

'It was an important moment for me in a class reading Wilfred Owen. We read that poem 'Miners', where he compares the lads in the trenches to coal miners. I come from a mining background and here was someone considered a great poet using his art to write about people like me.'

'Working class people feel shut out. They've no familiarity with literature or art, or anything like that. They see well-to-do well educated people enjoying things like opera and theatre that aren't part of their lives. They feel the social injustice of it, so they want to rectify that injustice'

Norman Willis, (now retired) General Secretary of the TUC, writes poetry.

'I accept invitations whenever I can manage it to read my poetry in public. Last year I read at the Hay-on-Wye Literature Festival. Partly I do it to show that a committed trade unionist is no less committed because he reads and writes poetry. A lot of trade unionists think it isn't macho to do that sort of thing. You've got to show you know, it can be an important part of being human.'

DISCUSSION

What do you think each person speaking here thinks about literature?

What do you think about their comments?

Is the word 'literature' off-putting to you or people you know? If so, why is this?

Is Shakespeare just for 'them'?

Do any particular books have a meaning for you?

What makes a story or poem one that you would want to return to, has a special meaning or would endure through time in your view?

[Quotes from V. Hughes *Literature belongs to Everyone* Arts Council of Great Britain (1991)]

Then let us pray that come it may
As come it will for a' that,
That Sense and Worth, oe'er a' the earth
Shall bear the gree*, and a' that
For a' that, and a' that
That Man to Man the warld o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.'

Robert Burns

*Shall bear the gree –
Shall come first

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Where have all the women gone?

In recent years women have made a more obvious contribution to art, literature, poetry and music. This has been partly due to the women's movement, but is also due to women's greater independence and freedom. There seems to be a correlation between women's freedom and their production of the arts. For instance, Taslima Nasrin of Bangladesh recently wrote a novel, *Shame* (1994) for which she has been threatened with death by Islamic fundamentalists and hounded from her country. Less dramatically, in Britain, working class women find they lack the time and finances to develop talents and skills.

In the 1930s, Virginia Woolf wrote her well known book, *A Room of One's Own.* In it she offers the following story about why only a man could have become a Shakespeare.

‘Be that as it may, I could not help thinking, as I looked at the works of Shakespeare on the shelf, that the bishop was right at least in this; it would have been impossible, completely and entirely, for any woman to have written the plays of Shakespeare in the age of Shakespeare. Let me imagine, since facts are so hard to come by, what would have happened had Shakespeare had a wonderfully gifted sister, called Judith, let us say. Shakespeare himself went, very probably – his mother was an heiress – to the grammar school, where he may have learnt Latin – Ovid, Virgil and Horace – and the elements of grammar and logic. He was, it is well known, a wild boy who poached rabbits, perhaps shot a deer, and had, rather sooner than he should have done, to marry a woman in the neighbourhood, who bore him a child rather quicker than was right. That escapade sent him to seek his fortune in London. He had, it seemed, a taste for the theatre; he began by holding horses at the stage door. Very soon he got work in the theatre, became a successful actor, and lived at the hub of the universe, meeting everybody, knowing everybody, practising his art on the boards, exercising his wits in the streets, and even getting access to the palace of the queen. Meanwhile his extraordinarily gifted sister, let us suppose, remained at home. She was as adventurous, as imaginative, as agog to see the world as he was. But she was not sent to school. She had no chance of learning grammar and logic, let alone of reading Horace and Virgil. She picked up a book now and then, one of her brother's perhaps, and read a few pages. But then her parents came in and told her to mend the stockings or mind the stew and not moon about with books and papers. They would have spoken sharply but kindly, for they were substantial people who knew the conditions of life for a woman and loved their daughter – indeed, more likely than not she was the apple of her father's eye. Perhaps she scribbled some pages up in an apple loft on the sly, but was careful to hide them or set fire to them. Soon, however, before she was out of her teens, she was to be betrothed to the son of a neighbouring woolstapler. She cried out that marriage was hateful to her, and for that she was severely beaten by her father. Then he ceased to scold her. He begged her instead not to hurt him, not to shame him in this matter of her marriage. He would give her a chain of beads or a fine petticoat, he said; and there were tears in his eyes. How could she disobey him? How could she break his heart? The force of her own gift alone drove her to it. She made up a small parcel of her belongings, let herself down by a rope one summer's night and took the road to London. She was not seventeen. The birds that sang in the hedge were not more musical than she was. She had the quickest fancy, a gift like her brother's, for the tune of words. Like him, she had a taste for the theatre. She stood at the stage door; she wanted to act, she said. Men laughed in her face. The manager – a fat, loose-lipped man – guffawed. He bellowed something about poodles dancing and women acting – no woman, he said, could possibly be an actress. He hinted – you can imagine what. She could get no training in her craft. Could she even seek her dinner in a tavern or roam the streets at midnight? Yet her genius was for fiction and lusted to feed abundantly upon the lives of men and women and the study of their ways. At last – for she was very young, oddly like Shakespeare the poet in her face, with the same grey eyes and rounded brows – at last Nick Greene the actor-manager took pity on her; she found herself with child by that gentleman and so – who shall measure the heat and violence of the poet's heart when caught and tangled in a woman's body? – killed herself one winter's night and lies buried at some cross-roads where the omnibuses now stop outside the Elephant and Castle.

That, more or less, is how the story would run, I think, if a woman in Shakespeare's day had had Shakespeare's genius. But for my part, I agree with the deceased bishop, if such he was – it is unthinkable that any woman in Shakespeare's day should have had Shakespeare's genius. ’

Virginia Woolf *A Room of One's Own* Granada (1979)

DISCUSSION

What hurdles faced Shakespeare's sister that Shakespeare did not face?

How far today do women face hurdles that men do not? Is it harder for ethnic minority women?

It is clearly not only women that face hurdles in producing art or literature. Working class men face them too as Woolf noted. What are these hurdles?

Is the growing emphasis on marketing and profitability in the arts making it even harder for these groups to have their work taken seriously?

ACTIVITY
You have £100m to spend nationally and annually on encouraging creative production amongst groups who tend to be excluded. How do you think the money would best be spent?

Reading for pleasure

Fill in the following questionnaire and then compare your experience and views with two or three others

DO YOU READ:

OFTEN ☐
SOMETIMES ☐
SELDOM ☐

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DO YOU REGULARLY READ

NEWSPAPERS ☐
MAGAZINES ☐
POEMS ☐
NON-FICTION ☐
SHORT STORIES ☐
COMICS ☐
NOVELS ☐
OTHER ☐

WHICH KIND OF FICTION DO YOU LIKE?

DETECTIVE ☐
ROMANCE ☐
COMEDY ☐
ESPIONAGE ☐
WAR ☐
HISTORICAL ☐
SOCIAL REALISM ☐

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO READ MORE OF?

DO YOU HAVE FAVOURITE WRITERS?

WHO OR WHAT HAS ENCOURAGED YOU TO READ?

WHAT DO YOU GET OUT OF READING?

WHO OR WHAT HAS PUT YOU OFF READING?

ACTIVITY:

Recommendations: people willing to do so should recommend one book to the others explaining briefly its story and plot and why they would recommend it.

Talking about films

WHAT IS A RECENT FILM WHICH YOU HAVE ENJOYED?

DID THE MAIN CHARACTERS GROW AND CHANGE DURING THE NARRATIVE OR DID THEY STAY MUCH THE SAME?

WHAT TYPE OF FILM WAS IT?

(e.g. comedy, romance, espionage, social comment)

WAS IT MORE THAN JUST ENTERTAINMENT, AND IF SO, HOW?

WHAT WAS THE STORY?

WHAT DID YOU LIKE AND DISLIKE ABOUT THE FILM?

WHAT WERE THE MAIN THEMES ?

(e.g. anger, love, good winning over bad)

WHO WOULD YOU RECOMMEND IT TO?

You could use your notes for a class presentation or to share your ideas with a neighbour.

Musical acitivities

ACTIVITY ONE

What pieces of music do you associate with feeling:

- SOOTHED
- PATRIOTIC
- READY TO FIGHT OR STRUGGLE
- ROMANTIC
- SAD
- LOSS
- GLAD TO BE ALIVE

What role does music play in your life?
How important is it to you?

ACTIVITY TWO

DESERT ISLAND DISCS

Each person should bring in one short piece of music, which may or may not include lyrics.

This piece should be a much loved work that would not be tired of on the desert island.

Each person has a couple of minutes to introduce the piece and explain why they would take it with them. (e.g. why they would not tire of it; what it means to them; how it would help them cope with life alone on a desert island; what it makes them feel)

ACTIVITY THREE

Each person should bring in the lyrics of one song that they particularly like. You might want to agree a theme such as love, resistance, nostalgia etc. If possible bring in the song on tape to play.

In turn, read out the lyrics and explain:

- who it is by
- why you think they wrote it
- how the lyrics are structured – the shape
- what the themes or messages are
- how s/he gets it over
- how it fits together with the music
- why you like it

Reading short stories

A well written short story is a real work of art. In many ways it is harder to write shorter than longer tales because imperfections are easier to spot,

A short story usually concentrates on fewer characters than a longer story. It tends to have only one plot and one climactic point usually close to the end. Its brevity means language needs to be used with great care and economy to convey the scenes, characters and their development. Time sequences in short stories are usually much shorter too than in long stories. Very often the tale hangs around one critical moment in time. Often short stories concentrate on what is going on in the mind of one character who faces a pivotal moment, known or unknown. The drama lies in creating the suspense of indecision, or a shockingly unexpected outcome.

Agree amongst yourselves to read the same story. If it is quite long it is advisable to read it in advance. Otherwise it is possible and in many ways desirable to read it out loud together, because you can more readily hear the careful use of language.

Aspects to look out for:

- the introduction - stop and notice how much information is conveyed very economically here

- the themes – what is the story about?

- the way the mood is created – reference to colour, weather, temperature, sounds, the way the characters look, behave and relate to each other

- the way time is used

- the use of symbolism

- the description of the characters – how are you meant to feel towards them? how does the writer feel towards them? Do they develop or change as the story progresses?

- the ways in which class or gender or race is dealt with or comes into it

- the language – is it straight narrative or does it try to get inside the consciousness of the characters?

- the ending- how does the story build up to this moment; how does it make you feel?

(Useful anthologies include those by James Joyce, Katherine Mansfield, Alice Walker, D.H.Lawrence, Chekhov. There are also growing numbers of volumes of work from African, Caribbean and Asian writers.)

Reading poetry

'A successful poem presents the reader with a distillation or concentration of thought. Not only the meaning of the words, but also the physical structure and shape of the poem, the sound, rhythm and distribution of the words may contribute to convey the overall picture.'

Rosie Martin – tutor and secretary, *Changing Directions*

I used to think poetry was really naff, but now we've looked at some it's a revelation!

Poetry is really important to me. It helps me get through my life and gives me lots of pleasure.

I don't like all of it, but some I do. I've started writing it too.

Changing Directions **members**

Poetry comes in all shapes and sizes. Some is structured according to strict metric rules, some is freer allowing shape to more closely follow expression. It covers all subjects and ranges from comic to political to tragic.

One thing that poetry has in common is the attempt to *economically and precisely* express ideas and feelings. Getting the right word is important. Finding the right image (and avoiding using other people's) is vital.

Lots of people don't like poetry because they have been force fed it at school, or think it's not very macho or possibly have never tried it.

In adulthood poetry *can* be a revelation. Newcomers often realise that they can make sense of it, that if offers another way of grappling with emotions and ideas, that it can excite, console, argue, challenge, sooth, amuse, disturb, and also make you think very hard. The role of language in poetry is central and reading poetry can make you think much harder and become more effective in expressing your own ideas and feelings.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A POEM

Poetry is not always easy to read. There is usually much more there than meets the eye. This is part of the pleasure of poetry. The following may help you get more out of the poems you read:

- SHAPE – what shape is the writer using and why? Consider how the shape and content relate to each other
- THEMES – what is the poem about…common themes include love, loss, childhood, struggle and resistance, acceptance, death
- SYMBOLS AND IMAGES – what are these used to describe; how do these make you look at the subject matter; what feelings do they conjure?
- METAPHORS AND SIMILES – what pictures are created in your mind by the language used; is the meaning literal or are the words a vehicle for another meaning?
- RHYTHM – words or combination of words are often used to create a particular sound or mood; look for repeated letters (alliteration), soft words, hard words, rhythms within words, made up words
- MOOD – how does the poet create a particular mood, give the poem a particular tone?
- ENDING – how does the poem end? does the way in which it ends conclude what you have just heard or does it make you have to rethink?
- THE WRITER – finding out about the writer, their personal histories, their pre-occupations can help you make sense of what might otherwise be very difficult to grasp

When you are reading poetry it is easy to get involved in discussions about the content. To fully appreciate the poem it is important to keep returning to the text. Be aware of the difference between 'reading out' ideas from a poem and 'reading in' your own ideas.

ACTIVITY

SIX THINGS TO DO WITH A POEM

In small groups, have a go at interpreting it and share your ideas.

Choose a lengthy one that would benefit from reading out loud. Dramatise it!

Take a poem as a starting point and each go away and use it to inspire one of your own.

Bring in one love poem or song that you like. Be prepared to read it and introduce it.

Go through some poems looking specifically at the images used. Discuss how effective they are, what they conjure up for you, what part they play in the whole poem.

Analyse the shape of a poem you like. See if you can write one using a similar shape.

SOME USEFUL VOLUMES

The Rattlebag Ted Hughes and Seamus Heaney
The Faber Book of 20th Century Women's Poetry Ed. Fleur Adcock
The Penguin Book of Scottish Verse
Daughters of Africa Ed. Margaret Busby (includes prose too)
The New Poetry Eds. Hulse, Kennedy and Morley
We have also enjoyed writings by Carol Ann Duffy, Jackie Kay, Alice Walker, Tony Harrison, Seamus Heaney.

Play reading

The local county library may stock sets of plays which you can borrow as the equivalent of one book on the library ticket.

Play-reading can provide enjoyable and lively sessions. It encourages people to work closely as a group, develops confidence, and can show up latent talent! Most importantly it is an excellent way of introducing the works of different playwrights in a way that is lively and memorable.

PLANNING

You need to discuss carefully what sort of play you want to have a go at. This, pragmatically, will depend to some extent on the range the library has to offer. The library may have a list you can browse through.

Someone needs to be allocated the task of reading the chosen play beforehand and finding out a little bit about…

the author

the historical context

the main themes

the main characters

the type of play (genre)… comedy… tragedy… farce

This information is usually in the introduction.

It is also useful to think about…

how long it is and whether certain sections can be cut

whether there are plenty of parts so everyone who wants to can join in. If not you can easily swap around.

PLAYS WE HAVE USED

We have read the following plays and found them to work well:

Mother Courage Bertholdt Brecht

Educating Rita Willy Russell (not many parts but you can share the main ones out)

Women of Troy Euripides – an astonishing anti-war play written 500 B.C.

A Taste of Honey Shelagh Delaney – about a mother and daughter relationship in working class Manchester

A Doll's House Henrik Ibsen – a woman's struggle for autonomy

Roots Arnold Wesker – a working class girl finds herself

Death of a Salesman Arthur Miller – a questioning of the American consumer dream and a study of failure

Under Milk Wood Dylan Thomas – a wonderful enjoyable experience about the characters in a Welsh village

There are also many books of one act plays available

Arty–fartying about

It was not till I began to put brush to canvas that I really began to appreciate art. I used to visit galleries but picked out the 'nice' pictures that were pleasing to my eye, mostly the portraits and landscapes.

I started reading about artists' lives and began to conclude that artists were after all, human beings… their art was expression rather than impression. They expressed words from within, through their hands – just as a composer expressed himself through music.

I have painted and drawn for a long time but did not discover my talent until I was thirty years old. Before then and as a child at school I thought I was hopeless. People say to me 'I can't draw for toffee' and I say to them that everyone who is able to hold a pencil has the ability to create the 'words within'. When looking at any art remember that hands made it, memories, emotions and thoughts inspired it…

Cindy, *Changing Directions*

LOOKING AT ART

As a group it can be great fun to visit local galleries. Take back postcards where possible for discussion.

GUIDELINES…or questions to consider when looking at a picture:

- what is the first reaction to what you are seeing?
- why are you having this reaction?
- what is the subject? is it all that it seems? does it seek to please/disturb/elevate/challenge/show off technique/make you think/stop you thinking/match the curtains?
- what colours has the artist used and why?
- how has the artist arranged the composition – is it in balance, how do the different forms relate to each other, how is your eye encouraged to wander round the painting; does one part hold your attention?
- how would you describe the style – expressionist, representative, abstract, impressionist, realistic?
- having thought more about it would you modify your initial views of the picture?
- how important do you think it is to know more about the artist and their motives in painting the picture?

FURTHER ACTIVITIES

- **encourage anyone in your group involved in arts or crafts to talk to you about it**
- **agree collectively to learn more about a particular painter or school of painting**
- **encourage people to visit exhibitions and report back**
- **ask local artists to come and talk to your group – they are often pleased to do so**

REFERENCES

Brecht, B. *The Threepenny Opera*

Burns, Robert (1969), 'For a' that and a' that', in *Poems and Songs*, Open University Press

Hardy, T. (1986), *Jude the Obscure*, Macmillan

Hughes, K. & Schofield, A. (1994), 'What has Dylan Thomas got to do with getting people back to work', *Adults Learning*, Jan 1994

Hughes, V. (1991), *Literature belongs to Everyone*, Arts Council

Russell, W. (1986), *Educating Rita*, Methuen

Williams, R. (1992), *Border Country* – Essays on Adult Education, NIACE

Woolf, V. (1979), *A Room of One's Own*, Granada

6

Identity and resistance

Notes for tutors 114 *Book Ends – Tony Harrison* 119

The Good Teachers – Carol Ann Duffy 120

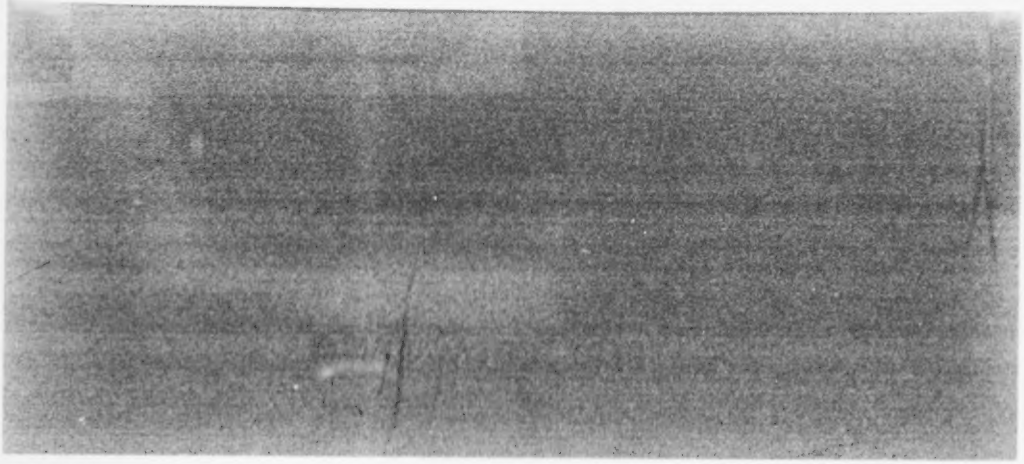
Beggars, from Down and Out in London and Paris – George Orwell 121

A Modest Proposal – Jonathan Swift 122

For a' that and a' that – Robert Burns 124

Ain't I a Woman – Sojourner Truth 125

The Adoption Papers – Jackie Kay 126



EXTRACTS AND ACTIVITIES

NOTES FOR TUTORS

There are several reasons for including literature and poetry in course programmes. Literature can open doors to other ways of seeing and describing the world. It encourages a closer consideration of emotional experience and ways of expressing those experiences. Language comes under close scrutiny in all its forms-expressive, persuasive, manipulative, ironic, and so on. Literature offers insights into the experiences of others and invites comparisons and contrasts across classes, culture and ages. Contemporary issues can also be illuminated by reading literature both past and present. Challenging some of the fears and pre-conceived ideas about 'literature for them' can also help people reclaim what is in fact a common heritage and present 'culture as ordinary'.

The term 'literature' is sometimes narrowly used, other times loose and wide and difficult to pin down, changing as definitions do over time. It goes beyond the fictional and the subjective to embrace a wide diversity of cultural forms. Perhaps a better discussion to have is what shapes ideas and debates about what literature is in different times and different cultures. Many students have an in-built resistance to the term, and demystifying it is perhaps the best place to start.

The pieces of writing included here are inevitably a selection. They have all generated plenty of feeling and discussion, though of course are not all popular with everyone. They have been chosen in part to encourage students to consider language and form, and also to generate consideration of the issues raised. Keeping participants to the point can be tricky at times as much of the writing we use can lead to many another discussion. This, of course is very valuable, but it is a good idea to suggest an initial close focus on the text.

The following pieces are broadly chosen for their connection with the themes of Identity and Resistance. These are particularly vibrant themes for work with people who are unemployed.

The chapter is organised around suggestions for use with particular pieces. The extracts themselves follow on. This is so that you can give a clean text to students and can use the text in a different way from that suggested.

BREAD AND ROSES

As we come marching, marching,
we battle too for men,
For they are women's children and
we mother them again,
Our lives shall not be sweated
from birth until life closes;
Hearts starve as well as bodies,
give us bread, but give us roses.

James Oppenheimer 'Bread and Roses'; sung by women members of the American Socialist movement Independent Workers of the World ('Wobblies') in the 1920s

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BOOK ENDS

TONY HARRISON (1937-)

Tony Harrison was born in Leeds and refers often to memories of childhood and his working class background in his poetry. He also makes frequent use of colloquial language.

- Ask someone to read out the poem.
- Without knowing any more than this about the author, what does the poem tell you about him?
- What is the author trying to do in the first two lines?
- Who is the poem about?
- What is the poem about?
- Why is it called 'Bookends'?
- How does the writer feel? How do you know?
- How does his father feel? How do you know?
- What was the importance of the mother to them both?
- How does the poem make you feel?
- Why should books come between father and son?
- Do you feel that getting involved in education will separate you from your roots?

THE GOOD TEACHERS

CAROL ANN DUFFY (1955-)

Carol Ann Duffy was born in Glasgow and now writes freelance in London. She has a considerable amount of work in print and recently won the Whitbread award for poetry (1993). Her poetry covers a wide range of themes, mainly around contemporary concerns. In this poem education and class interest and concern her

- Ask someone to read the poem out.
- What is the poem about?
- What words are used to describe the teachers?
- What do they all teach?
- Does the girl in the poem come from the same background? How do you know?
- How does the first two lines connect with the final verse?
- What is the time sequence?
- How does the poem use humour? Is it a funny poem?
- How does it make you feel?

DOWN AND OUT IN LONDON AND PARIS

GEORGE ORWELL (1903-1950)

BEGGARS

George Orwell wrote this book in 1933 after working in a series of low paid jobs in London and Paris during the great depression. Despite his very middle class origins Orwell saw himself as a democratic socialist and wrote passionately about unemployment, democracy and working class life.

The piece here is highly satirical – in this case it exposes for ridicule certain attitudes and values about work and money in society.

The piece divides neatly into three paragraphs. These succinctly deliver the very economical argument. The final sentence neatly rounds off the argument.

- What is each paragraph doing? What is the main point being made in each paragraph?

- What is it that Orwell is ridiculing in this extract?

- What is it that Orwell is saying about businessmen here?

- Divide into two groups. One group should draw up conventional statements made about beggars. The second group will draw up statements in defense of begging such as those made here. Compare the two lists.

- Do these lists include statements made about groups in society today? What social policy implications flow from the different lists?

- Why do groups such as claimants, new age travellers, moonlighters, lone parents draw such ire when people who deforest land for beef burgers, pollute oceans with decommissioned submarines, or produce useless products like loo roll covers and plastic Christmas trees do not?

A MODEST PROPOSAL

JONATHAN SWIFT (1667-1745)

Written in 1729 this piece of sharp satire aimed to reveal how close to the surface lie grotesque implications obscured by the language and conventions of political policy making.

The piece is shocking and students often react by saying things like 'this can't be what he means'

It needs reading carefully. It is a good idea to let them have the extract a week in advance which will also give them time to think about it.

You will need to explain what irony is. The title, for instance, carries a meaning profoundly at odds with the content of the piece. The tone is heavily satirical and ironic throughout.

Encourage students to consider the language. For instance:

- what words or phrases are used which take away the humanity of the people being discussed?
- how does this in combination with reducing people to numbers begin to allow for unspeakable suggestions to become acceptable?
- in what ways does the text encourage the reader to collude e.g. 'I think it is agreed by all parties?'
- what emotive language is used that permits a further distancing of reader and subject? e.g. thieves, professed beggars
- how does the writer present himself as a reasonable, concerned and caring person? 'I do humbly offer it to public consideration.'
- can you think of any examples of writing or rhetoric which you have seen or heard which makes the shocking respectable e.g. some of the descriptions of the war against Iraq describing civilian killing as collateral damage
- think of an incident or event that shocks you and write about it in that makes it palatable or acceptable; what devices have you used?

(George Orwell's essay *Politics and the English Language* is a very useful reference for further ideas on euphemistic language.)

FOR A' THAT AND A' THAT

ROBERT BURNS (1759-1796)

Living between 1759-96, Robert Burns experienced considerable poverty and hardship which contributed to his early death. He believed in the equality of men (sic) and was a strong supporter of the French Revolution. His poetry is varied and is all written in colloquial Scottish which makes it initially difficult for the non-Scot, but it is worth persevering! His birthday is widely remembered on January 25th by local Burns' Night celebrations.

It is a good idea to start by asking how many in the group have a Scottish connection. It is surprising how many do because like Ireland it is historically an emigre society.

If you have a Scot in the group ask them to read it out.

You'll need to begin by clarifying bits of the language.

- What is Burns saying about 'honest poverty'?
- What does he have to say about lords and princes?
- What images does he use in all cases?
- What does the final verse do – and especially the final two lines?
- How can you tell that this is a song?
- Do you think men and women receive this poem differently?
- This song was written 250 years ago. Is it therefore just of historical interest?

AIN'T I A WOMAN

SOJOURNER TRUTH (1797-1883)

This famous and remarkable poem was delivered to the second National Women's Suffrage convention in Ohio, 1852. Truth was the only activist fighting simultaneously for those doubly oppressed by race and sex. She herself had been born a slave, was sold away from her mother at the age of nine. She married a slave and they had five children. She was finally freed in 1827. A very religious woman, she campaigned tirelessly for political and union causes.

The verse is a powerful piece of rhetorical writing. It begins by setting out the ideas it is challenging, the Victorian middle class view of white femininity.

Against this Truth makes her powerful case as a poor black woman born into slavery, but at every stage fighting.

- What words would you use to describe Soujourner Truth?
- What sort of life has she led? What is the impact of the repetition 'ain't I a woman'?
- Rhetorical speaking involves building up a case in order to persuade. How does she do this?
- Why do you think this poem continues to be so widely used and referred to?
- How far do you have to be black and female to fully appreciate its impact?

THE ADOPTION PAPERS

JACKIE KAY (1961-)

Semi-autobiographical, the Adoption Papers is a long, rich, complex but accessible poem exploring issues, feelings and thoughts around a black girl's adoption. It is spoken through three voices – the birth mother, the adoptive mother and the daughter, and uses colloquial language. The extract here deals with the attempts by the adoptive, Communist Party mother, who cannot herself give birth, to adopt a baby. The second verse is spoken by the daughter, the rest by the adoptive mother.

It is another excellent poem for reading aloud, especially if someone has a Scottish accent.

Verse 1

- What does this verse tell you about…the adoptive mother…the adoption agencies (early 1960s)
- How does it deal with racism?
- How do you feel towards the adoptive mother?

Verse 2

- What relationship does this verse bear to the previous one?
- What information did the daughter receive and not receive about her birth mother? What is the effect of not telling us how she felt on receiving this information?

Verse 3

This section is in three lined verses each encapsulating a moment, an idea, or an action.

- What do you learn about the image of good (and bad) motherhood held by social services at this time?
- What picture do you build up of the adoptive mother? What does the author feel about her? How do you know?
- Why does the adoptive mother take the risk that she does at the end of the interview? Would you?

OVERALL…

- What does give us our sense of who we are?

- Do you have to give birth to be a mother? Do you have to be a woman to be a mother?

- In what ways is ethnicity central to our view of ourselves?

Book Ends

Baked the day she suddenly dropped dead
we chew it slowly that last apple pie.

Shocked into sleeplessness you're scared of bed.
We never could talk much, and now don't try.

You're like book ends, the pair of you, she'd say,
Hog that grate, say nothing, sit, sleep, stare....

The 'scholar' me, you, worn out on poor pay,
only our silence made us seem a pair.

Not as good for staring in, blue gas,
too regular each bud, each yellow spike.

A night you need my company to pass
and she not here to tell us we're alike!

Your life's all shattered into smithereens.

Back in our silences and sullen looks,
for all the Scotch we drink, what's skill between's
not the thirty or so years, but books, books, books.

Tony Harrison
Selected Poems (1984) Penguin

The Good Teachers

You run round the back to be in it again.
No bigger than your thumbs, those virtuous women
size you up from the front row. Soon now,
Miss Ross will take you for double History.
You breathe on the glass, making a ghost of her, say
South Sea Bubble Defenestration of Prague.

You love Miss Pirie. So much, you are top
of her class. So much, you need two of you
to stare out from the year, serious, passionate.
The River's Tale by Rudyard Kipling by heart.
Her kind intelligent green eye. Her cruel blue one.
You are making a poem up for her in your head.

But not Miss Sheridan. Comment vous appelez.
But not Miss Appleby. Equal to the square
of the other two sides. Never Miss Webb.
Dar es Salaam. Kilimanjaro. Look. The good teachers
swish down the corridor in long, brown skirts,
snobbish and proud and clean and qualified.

And they've got your number. You roll the waistband of your
skirt over and over, all leg, all
dumb insolence, smoke-rings. You won't pass.
You could do better. But there's the wall you climb
into dancing, lovebites, marriage, the Cheltenham
and Gloucester, today. The day you'll be sorry one day.

Carol Anne Duffy *Selected Poems* (1994) Penguin

It is worth saying something about the social position of beggars, for when one has consorted with them, and found that they are ordinary human beings, one cannot help being struck by the curious attitude that society takes towards them. People seem to feel that there is some essential difference between beggars and ordinary 'working' men. They are a race apart – outcasts, like criminals and prostitutes. Working men 'work', beggars do not 'work'; they are parasites, worthless in their very nature. It is taken for granted that a beggar does not 'earn' his living, as a bricklayer or a literary critic 'earns' his. He is a mere social excrescence, tolerated because we live in a humane age, but essentially despicable.

Yet if one looks closely one sees that there is no essential difference between a beggar's livelihood and that of numberless respectable people. Beggars do not work, it is said; but, then, what is work? A navvy works by swinging a pick. An accountant works by adding up figures. A beggar works by standing out of doors in all weathers and getting varicose veins, chronic bronchitis, etc. It is a trade like any other; quite useless, of course – but, then, many reputable trades are quite useless. And as a social type a beggar compares well with scores of others. He is honest compared with the sellers of most patent medicines, high-minded compared with a Sunday newspaper proprietor, amiable compared with a hire-purchase tout – in short, a parasite, but a fairly harmless parasite. He seldom extracts more than a bare living from the community, and, what should justify him according to our ethical ideas, he pays for it over and over in suffering. I do not think there is anything about a beggar that sets him in a different class from other people, or gives most modern men the right to despise him.

Then the question arises, Why are beggars despised? – for they are despised, universally. I believe it is for the simple reason that they fail to earn a decent living. In practice nobody cares whether work is useful or useless, productive or parasitic; the sole thing demanded is that it shall be profitable. In all the modern talk about energy, efficiency, social service and the rest of it, what meaning is there except 'Get money, get it legally, and get a lot of it'? Money has become the grand test of virtue. By this test beggars fail, and for this they are despised. If one could earn even ten pounds a week at begging, it would become a respectable profession immediately. A beggar, looked at realistically, is simply a businessman, getting his living, like other business men, in the way that comes to hand. He has not, more than most modern people, sold his honour; he has merely made the mistake of choosing a trade at which it is impossible to grow rich.

George Orwell
Down and out in London and Paris
(1975) Penguin

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A MODEST
PROPOSAL
FOR

Preventing the Children of Poor in Ireland, from being a burden to their Parents or Country; and for making them beneficial to the Publick

Written in the Year 1729

IT is a melancholy Object to those, who walk through this great Town, or travel in the Country; when they see the *Streets*, the *Roads*, and *Cabin-doors* crowded with *Beggars* of the Female Sex, followed by three, four, or six Children, *all in Rags*, and importuning every Passenger for an *Alms*. These *Mothers*, instead of being able to work for their honest Livelyhood, are forced to employ all their Time in strolling to beg Sustenance for their *helpless Infants*; who, as they grow up, either turn Thieves for want of Work; or leave their *dear Native Country, to fight for the Pretender* in Spain, or sell themselves to the *Barbados*.

I think it is agreed by all Parties, that this prodigious Number of Children in the Arms, or on the Backs, or at the *Heels* of their *Mothers*, and frequently of their *Fathers*, is *in the present deplorable State of the Kingdom*, a very great additional Grievance; and therefore, whoever could find out a fair cheap, and easy Method of making these Children sound and useful Members of the Commonwealth, would deserve so well of the Publick, as to have his Statue set up for a Preserver of the Nation.

But my Intention is very far from being confined to provide only for the Children *of professed Beggars*: It is of a much greater Extent, and shall take in the whole Number of Infants at a certain Age, who are born of Parents, in effect as little able to support them, as those who demand our Charity in the Streets.

As to my own Part, having turned my Thoughts for many Years, upon this important Subject, and maturely weighed the several *Schemes of other Projectors*, I have always found them grossly mistaken in their Computation. It is true a Child, just *dropt from its Dam*, may be supported by her Milk, for a Solar Year with little other Nourishment; at most not above the Value of two Shillings; Which the Mother may certainly get, or the Value in Scraps, by her lawful Occupation of *Begging*: *And*, it is exactly at one Year old, that I propose to provide for them in such a Manner, as, instead of being a Charge upon their *Parents* or the *Parish* or *wanting Food and Rainment* for the rest of their Lives; they shall, on the contrary, contribute to the Feeding, and partly to the Cloathing, of many Thousands.

There is likewise another great Advantage in my *Scheme* that it will prevent those voluntary Abortions and that horrid Practice of *Women murdering their Bastard children*; alas too frequent among us; sacrificing the *poor innocent Babes, I* doubt, more to avoid the Expence than the Shame; which would move Tears and Pity in the most Savage and inhuman Breast.

The Number of Souls in *Ireland being* usually reckoned one Million and a half; of these I calculate there may be about Two hundred Thousand Couples whose Wives are Breeders from which Number I subtract thirty thousand Couples, who are able to maintain their own Children; although I apprehend there cannot be so many, *under the present Distresses of The Kingdom*; but this being granted, there will remain an Hundred and Seventy Thousand Breeders. I again subtract Fifty Thousand, for those Women who miscarry, or whose Children die by Accident, or Disease, within the Year. There only remain an Hundred and Twenty Thousand Children of poor Parents, annually born: The Question therefore is, How this Number shall be reared, and provided for? Which, as I have already said, under the present Situation of Affairs, is utterly impossible, by all the Methods hitherto proposed: For we can *Neither employ them in Handicraft* or *Agriculture*; we neither build houses, (I mean in the Country) nor cultivate Land: They can very seldom pick up a Livelyhood by Stealing until they arrive at six Years old; except where they are of towardly Parts; although, I confess, they learn the Rudiments much earlier; during which Time, they can, however, be properly looked upon only as *Probationers*; as I have been informed by a principal Gentleman in the County of Avon, who protested to me, that he never knew above one or two Instances under the Age of six, even in a Part of the Kingdom so *renowned for the quickest Proficiency in that Art.*

I am assured by our Merchants, that a Boy or a Girl before twelve Years old, is no saleable

Commodity; and even when they come to this Age, they will not yield above Three Pounds, or Three Pounds and half a Crown at most, on the Exchange; which cannot turn to Account either to the Parents or the Kingdom; the Charge of Nutriment and Rags, having been at least four Times that Value.

I SHALL now therefore humbly propose my own Thoughts; which I hope will not be liable to the least Objection.

I HAVE been assured by a very knowing *American* of my Acquaintance in London; that a young healthy Child, well nursed, is, at a Year old, a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome Food; whether *Stewed, Roasted, Baked*, or *Boiled*; and, I make no doubt, that it will equally serve in a Fricasie, or Ragoust.

I DO therefore humbly offer it to *publick Consideration*, that of the Hundred and Twenty Thousand Children, already computed, Twenty thousand may be reserved for Breed; whereof only one Fourth Part to be Males; which is more than we allow to *Sheep, black Cattle*, or *Swine*; and my Reason is, that these Children are seldom the Fruits of marriage, a *Circumstance not much regarded* by our Savages; therefore, *one Male* will be sufficient to serve *four Females*. That the remaining Hundred thousand, may, at a Year old, be offered in Sale to the *Persons of Quality* and *Fortune*, through the Kingdom; always advising the Mother to let them suck plentifully in the last Month, so as to render them plump, and fat for a good Table. A Child will make two Dishes at an Entertainment for Friends; and when the Family dines alone, the fore or hind Quarter will make a reasonable Dish; and seasoned with a little Pepper or Salt, will be very good Boiled on the fourth Day especially in *Winter*.

I HAVE reckoned upon a Medium, that a Child just born will weigh Twelve Pounds; and in a solar Year, if tolerably nursed, increaseth to twenty eight Pounds.

I GRANT this Food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very *proper for Landlords*; Who, as they have already devoured most of the Parents, seem to have the best Title to the Children.

INFANTS Flesh will be in Season throughout the Year; but more plentiful in *March*, and a little before and after: For we are told by a grave * Author, an eminent French Physician, that *Fish being a prolifck Dyet*, there are more Children born in *Roman Catholick Countries* about Nine Months after *Lent, than* at any other Season: Therefore reckoning a Year after *Lent*, the Markets will be more glutted than usual; because the Number of *Popish Infants*, is, at least, three to one in this Kingdom; and therefore it will have one other Collateral Advantage, by lessening the Number of *Papists among* us.

(1981) Bantam

Song – For a' that and a' that –

Is there, for honest Poverty
That hings his head, and a' that;
The coward – slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Our toils obscure, and a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The Man 's the gowd for a' that. –

What though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hoddin grey, and a' that.
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A Man 's a Man for a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
Their tinsel show, and a' that;
The honest man, though e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that –

Ye see yon birkie ca'd, a lord,
Wha struts, and stares, and a' that,
Though hundreds worship at his word,
He 's but a coof for a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
His ribband, star and a' that,
The man of independant mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that. –

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man' s aboon his might,
Gude faith he mauna fa' that!

For a' that, and a' that,
Their dignities, and a' that,
The pith o' Sense, and pride o' Worth,
Are higher rank that a' that. –

Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that,
That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth
Shall bear the gree, and a' that.
For a' that, and a' chat,
Its comin yet for a' that,
That Man to Man the warld o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that. –

From *Burns – poems and songs* Oxford University Press (1969)

gowd	gold
hoddin grey	coarse grey woollen
birkie	Fellow
coof	Fool
aboon	Above
mauna fa' that	must not try
bear the gree	have the first place

Ain't I a Woman?

That man over there say
   a woman needs to be helped into carriages
and lifted over ditches
   and to have the best place everywhere.
Nobody ever helped me into carriages
   or over mud puddles
   or gives me a best place...

Ain't I a woman?
   Look at me
Look at my arm!
   I have plowed and planted
and gathered into barns
   and no man could head me...
Ain't I a woman?
   I could work as much
and eat as much as a man –
   when I could get to it –
and bear the lash as well
   and ain't I a woman?
I have born thirteen children
   and seen most of them sold into slavery
and when I cried out a mother's grief
   none but Jesus heard me...
and ain't I a woman?
   That little man in black there say
a woman can't have as much rights as a man
   cause Christ wasn't a woman.
Where did your Christ come from?
   From God and a woman!
Man had nothing to do with him!
   If the first woman God ever made
was strong enough to turn the world
   upside down, all alone
together women ought to be able to turn it
   rightside up again.

Sojourner Truth
In Daughters of Africa (1993) Cape

Chapter 3: The Waiting Lists

The first agency we went to
didn't want us on their lists,
we didn't live close enough to a church
nor were we church-goers
(though we kept quiet about being communists).
The second told us
we weren't high enough earners.
The third liked us
but they had a five-year waiting list.
I spent six months trying not to look
at swings nor the front of supermarket trolleys,
not to think this kid I've wanted could be five.
The fourth agency was full up.
The fifth said yes but again no babies.
Just as we were going out the door
I said oh you know we don't mind the colour.
Just like that, the waiting was over.

This morning a slim manilla envelope arrives
postmarked Edinburgh: one piece of paper
I have now been able to look up your microfiche
(as this is all the records kept nowadays).
From your mother's letters, the following
  information:
Your mother was nineteen when she had you.
You weighed eight pounds four ounces.
She liked hockey. She worked in Aberdeen
as a waitress. She was five foot eight inches.

I thought I'd hid everything
that there wasnie wan
giveaway sign left

I put Marx Engels Lenin (no Trotsky)
in the airing cupboard – she'll no be
checking out the towels surely

All the copies of the *Daily Worker*
I shoved under the sofa
the dove of peace I took down from the loo

A poster of Paul Robeson
saying give him his passport
I took down from the kitchen

I left a bust of Burns
my detective stories
and the Complete Works of Shelley

She comes at 11.30 exactly.
I pour her coffee
from my new Hungarian set

And foolishly pray she willnae
ask its origins – honestly
this baby is going to my head.

She crosses her legs on the sofa
I fancy I hear the *Daily Workers*
rustle underneath her

Well she says, you have an interesting home
She sees my eyebrows rise.
It's different she qualifies.

Hell and I've spent all morning
trying to look ordinary
– a lovely home for the baby.

She buttons her coat all smiles
I'm thinking
I'm on the home run

But just as we get to the last post
her eye catches at the same time as mine
a red ribbon with twenty world peace badges

Clear as a hammer and sickle
on the wall.
Oh, she says are you against nuclear weapons?

To Hell with this. Baby or no baby.
Yes I says. Yes yes yes.
I'd like this baby to live in a nuclear free world.

Oh. Her eyes light up.
I'm all for peace myself she says,
and sits down for another cup of coffee.

Jackie Kay
The Adoption Papers (1991) Bloodaxe

REFERENCES

Brecht, Bertholdt (1970), *Praise of Learning* in *Socialist Book of Verse*, Ed. Alan Bold

Burns, Robert (1969), 'For a' that and a' that', in *Poems and Songs*, Open University Press

Duffy, Carol Ann (1994), 'The Good Teachers', in *Selected Poems*, Penguin

Harrison, Tony (1984), 'Book Ends', in *Selected Poems*, Penguin

Kay, Jackie (1991), *The Adoption Papers*, Bloodaxe

Orwell, George (1975) *Down and Out in London and Paris*, p.153-4 Penguin

Swift, Jonathan (1981), 'A Modest Proposal', in *Gulliver's Travels and other Writings*, Bantam

Truth, Sojourner (1993), 'Ain't I a Woman', in *Daughters of Africa*, Cape

7

Challenging and changing

Challenging and changing – warm-up 131   *Speaking up for yourself 132*
Challenging the powerful as a group: self-advocacy 135
Rethinking masculinity 136   *Male and female 138*
Volunteering 139   *Writing, the experience 140*   *Using humour 142*
What's really going on – doing your own research 144
Conferences for beginners 146   *Running a workshop 148*
LETS help each other 150
What do you know about trade unions? – quiz 151
Trade unions and the challenge to unemployment 153
Trade unions internationally 154
The first million jobs 155   *Popular struggles 157*
Challenging poverty? A minimum wage 158   *What is to be done? 160*

INTRODUCTION

When unemployment, low pay or poverty are discussed by academics, politicians or media people, those involved are rarely consulted. If interviewed it is usually with a 'hard luck' story or a 'lucky break' such as winning the lottery, or a 'successful venture' tale such as setting up a flourishing (for a while!) small business. Both the paternalistic elements of the state and media and the more authoritarian share the tendency of neglecting to speak to the victims themselves, the former because they think they know better, the latter because the unemployed have forfeited their right to the seriousness accorded to other citizens.

The stigma attached particularly to being unemployed has been increasing throughout the past decade and a half. This has led to increased feelings of shame, indignity, hurt and anger. The extent of prejudice and discrimination experienced by the unemployed, while keenly felt, is unmapped, especially compared with the more seriously researched areas of sexism and racism.

This chapter considers various ways in which individuals, groups and larger bodies are attempting to challenge unemployment and exclusion and to have a voice in debates about unemployment.

Also included in this chapter is some direct experience of activities organised by the Changing Directions course. The value of collective projects and activities is great. They deliver the learning of a range of difficult skills and knowledge while promoting solidarity, increasing morale and challenging a sense of powerlessness.

Challenging and changing

There are all sorts of different ways in which individuals, groups and organisations refuse to accept unemployment or poor work prospects as inevitable. What can you think of?

HOW CAN INDIVIDUALS TRY TO MAKE CHANGES IN THEIR LIVES?

WHEN CAN IT BE BETTER FOR A GROUP OR ORGANISATION TO MAKE CHANGES?

WHAT ARE THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF EITHER APPROACH?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Speaking up for yourself

'Learning how to speak up for yourself doesn't necessarily get rid of your situation. It doesn't mean you are necessarily going to win an argument with the DSS, but it does make sure you give situations your best try and if you lose you do so with dignity'
Joanne

Being unemployed, in a job that doesn't begin to reflect your abilities, or lacking qualifications can have a very negative effect on self-esteem and confidence. There are many ways in which this can be tackled, for instance by joining a course, doing demanding voluntary work or getting involved with other people who value you. Another way is to begin to develop behavioural strategies that enable you to express your own feelings and wishes more clearly. In doing so you will begin to identify the sorts of behaviour other people are exhibiting which can also help you to handle difficult situations better. None of this guarantees that you will get what you want though people are often astonished at what a difference it can make. What it does do is help you judge situations better and handle them with more confidence. You may have lost the battle but at least emerge with your dignity intact.

Assertiveness training originated with the women's movement, but its appeal has become widespread and men and women have benefited from its ideas and techniques.

WHAT ASSERTIVENESS IS ABOUT

- feeling entitled to be taken seriously
- saying what you think or feel, plainly and clearly
- saying what you want
- recognising that other people have the right to
- do the same

GROUND RULES
Before using this material it is a good idea to agree collectively ground rules so that people feel happy about joining in.

DO YOU EVER WISH YOU WERE BETTER AT THE FOLLOWING?

- voicing your opinion in public
- standing up for yourself
- saying no
- saying what you feel about something

WHAT STOPS YOU DOING THE ABOVE EFFECTIVELY OR TO THE EXTENT THAT YOU WOULD LIKE?

ACTIVITY 1
In small groups discuss to what extent you have problems with the four examples and what causes them. What do you usually do about it?

Feed these ideas back to the larger group.

Becoming more assertive both individually and collectively can increase your confidence, boost your self-esteem and make you more effective in getting what you want individually or as a group.

DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO HANDLING SITUATIONS

In her book, *A Woman in Your Own Right*, Anne Dickson (1982) identifies four types of behaviour – aggressive, passive, manipulative and assertive.

Aggressive:
People who behave aggressively are often hiding low self-esteem. They use forcefulness and put-downs as a way of undermining other people. They cannot afford to see the other person's point of view because they are so determined to win.
Passive:
This kind of behaviour often means that people opt out of making decisions, and of taking responsibility for choices. They often see themselves as victims and put themselves down, or find it difficult to accept compliments.
Manipulative:
This is a kind of indirect aggression. Instead of being direct about what they want, manipulative people may scheme and deceive in order to get their own way. They often suffer from low self-esteem.
Assertive:
Behaving assertively involves being able to identify your feelings and ask directly for what you want. It is underpinned by enough self-esteem to be able to risk rejection, and not to be entirely dependent on other people's approval. This self-esteem is based on a belief that we all have the right to be heard, be respected and to be taken seriously.

This diagram may help you to understand these ideas more clearly

AGGRESSIVE/MANIPULATIVE
My needs are more important than yours 😐 😐

PASSIVE
Your needs are more important than mine 😐 😐

ASSERTIVE
We both have needs
I will let you know mine ☺ ☺
You let me know yours
Let's see what we can work out

ACTIVITY 2
1. How might these situations be approached using in turn each of the above behaviour profiles?

- **you want to ask your partner to be more helpful in the home**
- **a friend has borrowed £20 and you need to have it back**
- **the DSS give you an incorrect assessment of your entitlements and you want it reviewed**
- **a group of you are concerned about local facilities and don't think your local councillor is taking enough concern**

2. Body language – what sorts of body language go with the different types of behaviour – aggressive, passive, manipulative and assertive?

STATING WHAT YOU WANT

The following sequence is useful in difficult situations, for instance when you are making a complaint, or a request. It is also useful in collective situations. For instance when you are campaigning, it can provide an outline of a statement to a councillor or MP, a letter, a speech or report.

Above all, before you start, you need to be clear what it is you want

STAGE ONE
Explain how you see the situation.

STAGE TWO
Say what you think or feel about it.

STAGE THREE
Say what it is you want and who should do something about it.

acknowledge the right of the other person to behave in the same way

ACTIVITY 3

Act out the following scenarios in pairs showing how these situations might be assertively dealt with. It is up to you to decide whether you are successful or not in getting what you want…

- **someone cuts in front of you dangerously while driving**
- **you want the shop manager to replace a faulty radio**
- **you think your child's teacher has unfairly punished her**
- **your mother is keen for you to visit (again) and you feel you should spend more time with your family**
- **you don't drink and your friends keep trying to persuade you to**
- **you don't like the threatening tone the DSS has used in a letter to you and you want to go and say this in person**

EVERYONE HAS RIGHTS

Underpinning assertiveness is the idea that everyone has the following rights:

1. to be listened to and taken seriously
2. to say no
3. to be treated with respect
4. to change their mind
5. to ask for what they want
6. to ask for further information
7. to take time to make a decision

ACTIVITY 4

In small groups consider each of these in turn:

1. Consider one situation in your life, past or present, when feeling entitled to these rights would make or have made a difference.

2. Changing your behaviour so that you stand up for yourself can have a considerable impact on other people's attitudes towards you, sometimes positively, sometimes negatively. How would you deal with their response?

3. There are times when you might judge that behaving assertively might not be the wisest or safest thing to do. Can you think of examples? What would you do instead?

ACTIVITY 5

Mentally record one example of dealing with a situation more assertively and report it back to the group the following week.

Challenging the powerful as a group: self-advocacy

Organising for equality and change -'don't make decisions about us without us'

Self-advocacy evolved in the 1980s as a set of ideas and strategies whereby groups of people could have a voice in decisions and policies that affect them. The growing range of community and pressure groups in the 1970s and 1980s involved people demanding to be taken account of as citizens within democratic communities and as users of public services. Prior to this and influentially, the Workers' Control Movement developed in Britain in the 1960s, arguing that workers themselves had the clearest ideas how work could be more efficiently organised and argued that a more democratic organisation of the workplace would ensure the greatest benefits for all. In developing countries today there is growing recognition that it is ordinary people who know best how production can be increased, organisations can be more effective and poverty challenged.

Self-advocacy is, therefore, about speaking out for ourselves, self-determination and regaining control of our lives. A self-advocacy group is an *action* group, not just a support group. It can be a way of working together to end the oppression of unemployment and take on the responsibilities of citizenship rather than leaving remedial action to the professionals and officials. Through self-advocacy people represent their own rights, interests and needs. Through it they make their own space and develop their own agendas for change. By taking this positive action for themselves, they challenge the attitudes towards people who are unemployed that make us powerless or offer us participation that is only a token gesture.

Self-advocacy groups currently operate amongst users of benefits systems and services. Contact your local Claimants' Union, Social Services and Community Centres for details. They may also be able to help you establish your own group. Community Education or the local Workers' Education Association may also be able to help you.

- **How could a self-advocacy group help people who:**
  - **have mental health problems**
  - **are carers**
  - **are tenants**
  - **are lone parents?**
- **How would you go about setting one up?**
- **What sorts of action could you take or initiate?**

Rethinking masculinity

Changes in the labour market and family life are posing many new questions for men and women. There has perhaps never been a time when change has taken place so fast or relentlessly. There is hardly a part of people's sense of identity and personal lives that has remained untouched.

The labour force has seen the loss of millions of skilled manual jobs, the huge growth of part-time, casual and temporary jobs, the inclusion of women at around 50 per cent of the labour force, the drastic reduction in work prospects for youth, especially young black people.

On the family front there is more divorce and there are more single parents than ever before. People are more reluctant to become formally married and fewer children are born within a legal marriage. Whereas women in the past were more likely to feel marriage and family obligations as a duty, more feel today that they also want more personal satisfaction and to develop their abilities.

For many women these changes, despite the problems of low pay and a greater workload, offer new possibilities and more choices. For many men the changes can feel more daunting.

Central to the way in which most men have been brought up is the close connection between the job they do and their sense of identity. Any job can be better than no job. The question '*what do you do?*' is designed to elicit a work-related response such as '*I'm an electrician*' or '*I run my own business*'. More and more women also feel like this as the enduring phrase '*I'm just(!) a housewife*' testifies. It is probably a myth that women do not feel the loss of a job and an income as sharply as men. The effects, though, are perhaps different and often mean an intensification of their caring role.

For many men work time is actually increasing. The UK sees more overtime hours worked than anywhere in Europe. This means even less time spent at home or with children. However, for long-term unemployed men this is scarcely a problem. The increase in single or divorced men also poses people with special identity issues.

Such experiences have made many men rethink what other things identity can involve. The examples given opposite are by long-term unemployed men who have been on courses at Ruskin College, Oxford.

In western industrialised capitalist societies, definitions of masculinity are bound up with definitions of work. Whether it is in terms of physical strength or mechanical expertise, or in terms of ambition and competitiveness, the qualities needed by the successful worker are closely related to those of successful man.

Andrew Tolson (1977)

ACTIVITY 1

In small groups consider the case studies using these questions:

- **What changes have these different people gone through?**
- **What has caused the changes?**
- **How much does work matter to men in terms of their identity? Does it matter less for women?**
- **How much should work matter?**
- **Would making work a less important part of identity help people to cope without it? how could this be done?**
- **What other things might help men and women without work feel happy about who they are?**

'I'm a mechanic and I'm good at it. However, I haven't had a job for some time. I would like a job again and I plan to improve my writing skills for that. Meanwhile I don't see that men and women are all that different. I've helped to bring my children up and I think I'm as good at it as any woman. I help my wife in the house. We share things.' K

ACTIVITY 2

In small groups, which you might like to make men- or women-only, consider the following question:

What are the positive and negative aspects of being a man or woman today?

Use the handout 'Male and Female' to collect your ideas.

ACTIVITY 3

The following comments are made on the publicity material of DV8, an all-male dance group who perform 'Enter Achilles' (Oxford Playhouse 5th October 1995). What do you think of these comments?

'Why do men police each other's behaviour, ever ready to detect and eliminate unmanly activity, be it through ridicule, intimidation and/or threat?

The straitjacket of masculinity defines itself in don'ts: don't walk like that, don't talk like that, don't wear particular clothes or colours, don't show certain feelings.

It's not just that men don't express feelings – it's that the feelings they show are often not the ones they actually feel. Men have historically oppressed women, but how oppressive have they been to themselves and one another?'

'For about 19 years work was the central feature of my life. It controlled waking and sleeping, the amount of money I earned, citizenship, status and personal Identity. Work also suppressed my feelings of sharing and caring. Being unemployed now for nearly 4 years has cause me a lot of hardship but it has also brought me back in contact with myself. I've got in touch with things I thought I'd lost for ever such as my appreciation of cultural matters and my feelings towards them. Being able to think more about the way I feel is an important part of me today. I don't think it is good for men to suppress their feelings, but to be more aware and respectful of what is around them especially relationships. Bottling feelings up can cause depression or anger. Aggression and irresponsibility can take over when work starts to go wrong or disappears.' A.

ACTIVITY 4

New Man?

'When I was between the ages of about 12 and 21 I could not talk to my father. This was not because he was a violent or abusive man, or that he set out to make me feel distant from him, or inferior or weak. The problem, I realise now, was that he tried to conceal and deny the weaknesses that embarrassed him – shyness, caution, lack of confidence – in such a way that he left no common ground of vulnerability between us, no common space in which I could confess my own weaknesses to him as I might confess them to my mother or my sister.'

Richard Benson, *The Guardian* 15.12.97

Is there a generation gap between men today and their fathers?

Do men today find it easier to talk about their feelings and anxieties?

What changes would men like to see?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Male and female

Split the larger group into two groups, one of men and one of women. Men should tackle the left column and the women the right. Then compare notes.

ISSUES FACING MEN TODAY

ISSUES FACING WOMEN TODAY

POSITIVES OF BEING A MAN TODAY

POSITIVES OF BEING A WOMAN TODAY

NEGATIVES OF BEING A MAN TODAY

NEGATIVES OF BEING A WOMAN TODAY

WHAT MEN NEED

WHAT WOMEN NEED

Volunteering

The idea that unemployed people are '*idle*' couldn't be further from the truth. Many work in a voluntary capacity giving their services for free in many areas such as schools, playgroups, day centres, old people's homes, Claimant's Unions, Oxfam and Community centres. Michael Barratt Brown talks about a strong British tradition...

> **'the enormous number of democratically run voluntary organisations, more proportionately than in any country in the world... the thousands of charities and community associations providing personal care.'**
> **European Labour Forum**
> **Summer 1995**

One such worker, who spent three days a week in a special school for a year, writes the following...

The reasons why I think people do voluntary work are because they want to make a contribution to society, to be needed and useful and even to help make changes. It Is also because voluntary work does a lot of the things work does. It helps you structure your day, gain wider social and collective experiences, gain a sense of identity, give you regular activities and something to get up for.

You can also build up useful skills and experiences that help you rethink the future and work. This can help you with your C.V. and in getting an up-to-date reference. I used to be in banking and after many years of that and many years unemployed am now going to do a Social Work degree – with a useful reference from my employer.

There are things I ask myself though. If a job is worth doing why is it not a paid job? Many jobs people volunteer for could become paid jobs with the dignity of being taken off the dole. Some voluntary work is exploitative. It is fair to ask yourself – and them – what is in it for you as well as them. It is also a good idea to check out what expenses you will get if any and what insurance cover you have.

Overall, I think voluntary work is a good thing to do. It reminds you that in a materialistic society people really do want to help others. But they want a decent life too. Somehow voluntary work needs to take place within decent living standards for everybody.'

David

ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss the voluntary work undertaken by people in the group under the headings... what you got out of it... what they got out of it...

2. Your local library will have directories of voluntary organisations. Each person should take responsibility for finding out more about one organisation that interests them... aims... funding... membership ... activities... achievements.

3. Contact the local co-ordinator of local voluntary organisations (name and address in library) and ask them to come and meet you to talk about their work.

Writing, the experience

Writing up your experiences and feelings about being unemployed or in work that pays badly or doesn't satisfy can be a powerful medium through which individuals or groups of people can express themselves. It can also be a means through which individuals can share experiences and thoughts and begin to make more sense of what is happening to them, both positively and negatively.

'Until I joined the course, I thought that being unemployed was my own fault, some failing in me. Now I can see wider reasons which does make me feel a lot better as well as angry.'

Discussions can bring out some important similarities in people's experiences such as the difficulties of coping with a low income and the humiliating and oppressive experiences with the DSS. It can also bring out a range of differences related to people's life histories and personalities. More positive views about being unemployed or partly employed are a powerful condemnation of the tedium and meaningless of much paid work. Writing up these experiences can do the following:

- help other people talk about their experiences
- counter government ideas about the unemployed being work-shy etc.
- show that being kept socially marginalised and in enforced idleness is seriously damaging both tō individuals and society
- argue that the sort of paid work on offer today (and much in the past) is meaningless, exploitative and seriously inefficient in its wastage of human talent and potential
- explain the positive benefits of education and training

EXTRACTS FROM 'THE EXPERIENCE OF UNEMPLOYMENT'

The following extracts are taken from a publication called 'The Experience of Unemployment'. Members of the group decided which aspects of their lives they wished to write about. One person was appointed editor. Her job was to encourage pieces of writing from everyone, edit the pieces, put them in order and write an introduction. The publication was then sent to people chosen by the group including MPs, Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet members, Trade Unionists and people involved in adult education or work with the unemployed. It is also sold at conferences, day schools and other events.

'The worthy poor' – such as people with disabilities or chronic illness – are believed to be powerless to help themselves and therefore deserve the State's paternalistic support, while the 'unworthy' could help themselves if only they bothered. The best 'help' for such people seems to be threatening to deprive them of their rights – unemployment benefit to which they've contributed during their working lives to spur them on to greater effort.'
Val

'Unemployment has given me an identity crisis and the experience of unemployment has become the worst job I ever had. Before doing anything else, I had to take a good look at myself and establish what was going on. This was difficult because I had one eye on the future, one on the past and was cross-eyed in the present. My life-style had become frenetic, searching through the media for vacancies, requesting application forms, filling them in and sending them off and then awaiting the response – and then the cycle of events would repeat itself and so on ad infinitum.

The only break in this would be the occasional 'sorry' letter or a request for further information – interviews were few and far between and then they were only to find out if I was serious about working for £2.50 per hour with my qualifications '
John

'Positive effects are more time to devote to studying and learning. This can manifest itself in the development of one's own writing and communication skills which includes contacting people over the phone. Letters to government bodies, councillors, companies, if only a complaint help develop these skills. The very process of finding the correct person to write to is an acquired skill. Unemployment can strangely help this process. People in full-time work, maybe doing overtime to make ends meet, also taking time to travel to and from work, can find taking the time to sit and compile a constructive letter very difficult, if not impossible. Unemployment gives an individual the time and facility to carry out such tasks. Also unemployment gives you the time to see the effects of local and national government policies in action.'
Jem

ACTIVITY

Choose headings under which to discuss the effects of unemployment e.g. health effects, housing effects, impact on identity, – and positive effects. After identifying different ideas and experiences under each heading, ask one person to concentrate on writing a short piece under one of the headings, drawing on their own experience. You might also want to include ideas for actions which could improve people's experiences. Draw these pieces together in a small publication and decide whom you want to send it to. You could arrange a meeting or conference around the publication.

Using humour

One way of getting your own back on officials and politicians and keeping your sanity, is through humour. Humour can reach parts that conscientious prose and worthy speeches never do. It can send them up, reveal their lack of logic, expose bureaucratic dehumanising processes, and ignorant and privileged experience.

The examples below come from the lunch-time entertainment at a Conference entitled 'Unemployment – Still the Big Issue' on The Future of Work (June 1997) by the '*Porridge and Berries Group*'. The name of this group (of students) originates with the correspondence between a Conservative Councillor and a local newspaper decrying the lavish lifestyles and whingeing of the unemployed.

You might like to collect your own examples and find an opportunity of presenting them.

IF YOU DIE...

One of the pleasures in dealing with the DSS is the stimulation and challenge of dealing with a range of exciting and well-considered forms. Form A9 is a particular favourite.

'While you are getting Income Support you must tell us about any changes that might affect your benefit...we need to know...if you die. If you die...someone should send your order book back straight away with a letter or form A9. They must not cash any more orders. The amount of money that you are entitled to is based on the information that you have given us. If anything changes and you do not tell us you might get the wrong amount of money – and you could be breaking the law...but if you are not sure if we need to know about a particular change, please tell us anyway'

IT'S ALL ABOUT KEEPING A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

With so much misery around, who wants depressing stuff like the truth? We commend the attitude of former Conservative Cabinet Ministers who realised that it's not jobs that people want, it's feeling good and taking a positive approach. Kenneth Clarke should win prizes for lifting people's spirits with the following...

'At Consett you have now got one of the best steelworks in Europe. It doesn't employ as many people as it used to because it is so modern'.

On being corrected – there has been no steelworks at Consett for fifteen years – Clarke went on to say...

'Sorry – I've got the wrong one...Redcar...thank you for correcting me...Anyone who says I am unfeeling towards the North East of this is completely daft. It was a slip of the tongue. I got the two towns mixed up'.
The Guardian 4th March 1995

Two weeks later, despite the rash of complaints over the previous statement Clarke added:

'The crisps I do know are made in Consett, which I think is also one of the major centres in Western Europe for disposable nappies as well'.

Concerned Central Office support staff pointed out to him that the factory had closed in 1991 with the loss of 200 jobs.

YOU'VE NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD!

Continuing in a positive vein, was the upbeat Frances Cairncross, media editor of *The Economist*, talking in an after-dinner speech at Gleneagles to the Scottish Council Forum. We couldn't get there ourselves so we've relied on this report from the *Glasgow Herald* 28th February 1995.

Patterns of work and prosperity are likely to change for the better. New industries mean new skills and new opportunities for workers and new patterns of working offer individuals the chance to make more of their lives and talents…workers now have more opportunity than ever before to choose the jobs that suit them and fit in with their chosen way of life and incentives are there for them to improve their skills and be less paternalistic dominant employers.

Ms Cairncross then goes on to list the exciting jobs that weren't available to her when she chose her career in the 1960s.
…video store assistants, pizza delivery boys, leisure club attendants, people who fit cellular phones into cars and fish farmers.

What can you say…?

DON'T APPLY!

Form JBAL1, entitled 'Be Alert – Be Safe When Job-seeking' includes the interesting warning

'Don't apply for a job which seems to offer too much money for very little work.'

The cynic might suggest it means be dead suspicious if offered over £3 an hour…but perhaps it refers to possible invitations to join a Quango, become a member of the Lords or marry into the Royal Family. We say, go for it!

HARRIET IN WONDERLAND

And finally, attempting to cut the benefits of some of the poorest and weakest in society was bound to cause a furore. In a Radio 4 broadcast (10.12.97) John Humphreys tackled the Rt. Hon. Harriet Harman.
H.H. No, what I said was that the Tory approach was wrong, it's left one million lone mothers bringing up…
J.H. And that's why you've adopted it?
H.H. We have not adopted it.
J.H. You've adopted the cuts.
H.H. No. What we've done is offered lone mothers opportunities they have never had before.
J.H. This is Alice in Wonderland stuff, isn't it?

Enough said.

GOING ROUND IN CIRCLES WITH THE DSS

'This is going to create a bit of a problem.'
'Why'
'Well, you've written a letter.'
'Yes, you've got it in front of you.'
'But you've actually written a letter.'
'I know, you sent me a note about my past NI contributions. I've explained it all to you and where the supporting evidence is held – two other government departments.'
'We sent you a computerised, pre-printed communication about National Insurance.'
'Yes, and I've replied.'
'Well, you haven't really – you've sent a letter.'
'I know – I've encoded a letter. What's the problem?'
'Well, nothing really, except it's a letter.'
'But there's still a problem?'
'No – well, yes – you see it's a letter.'
'A letter?'
'Yes, it's a letter – it's not on a form.'
'A form – what form?'
'I don't know – but I can't decode your answer until it's on a form.'
'So give me a form.'
'I don't know what form to give you because you've sent a letter and I can't process what you've said.'
'What form goes with the letter you sent?'
'It depends on what answer you're going to give.'
David

ACTIVITY

Gather written material from newspapers and official publications and draw ideas from your own experiences of dealing with the DSS, Job Clubs, Training and Enterprise Councils and other bodies. Find out if your local authority funds creative writing or drama projects which could help you put these together as an entertainment – then invite an audience or offer yourselves to meeting or conferences.

What's really going on?

Doing your own research

There is a common image of research as being something done by remote academics in ivory towers often paid for by industry or government.

However, research can be undertaken by anyone. What it is essentially about is finding out new knowledge for whatever purpose. For many community groups the purpose is to inform and give weight to their campaigns. It can make visible people's experiences that are normally invisible and it can help to collect data that can be presented to politicians or the press.

What does the word 'research' mean to you?
How do people go about doing research?
Why do they do it?

DOING YOUR OWN RESEARCH

Choose a subject that has not been covered before, or to which you feel you have something to add. It is probably wise to select a small, manageable issue or question.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND RENTED HOUSING

'The piece of research we undertook was prompted by statements in adverts saying 'No DSS'.
It was also prompted by the experiences of many of the group of what was overt or covert discrimination against claimants.'

1. Research subjects are often based on people's direct experience.

'Our view was that landlords were discriminating on the basis of either the experience of the Council taking a long while to pay the rent, or some stereotypical 'moral panic' image of the unemployed.'

2. Doing a piece of research begins with the posing of a hypothesis (a hunch or idea) which you then set out to test and explore.

'Our research was what you might call 'bottom-up' as it originated with our own experience and concerns. It is to some degree subjective, but we consider our own experience to be real. It is based on values too, particularly that people should be treated justly. It is not possible to be objective because there is always a hidden agenda in research. Our view is that homelessness and poverty are due to structural and organisational conditions and not individual failings.'

3. All research involves values even if these are not made explicit. The idea of neutral research is a myth.

'We adopted a mix of both qualitative and quantitative methods to find out experiences individuals have had in seeking housing and also to produce some measurable data.'

4. There is a large range of research methods that can be used and you can be imaginative in how you get hold of information. Qualitative methods tend to involve small numbers and data collection that takes account of people's experiences. It might include interviews, case studies, personal accounts, group discussions, participant observation. Quantitative methods involve bigger surveys and measurement using figures. Research projects quite often combine the two.

'We began by trawling through local papers for adverts for accommodation lettings over one month. We immediately noted the adverts that specifically said 'No DSS' and represented them as a percentage of the whole group to identify whether there was a trend. Several of us then phoned up adverts that did not say 'No DSS'. We made out that we were seeking accommodation and asked all sorts of questions before we finally said we were claimants. In most cases the landlord then said no. Some just put the

phone down, some explained that it had to do with the Council not paying rent fast enough. We recorded these interviews in writing as we went along.

Amongst us we made sixteen calls to advertisements that did not say 'No DSS'. In each case we were turned down, having revealed our unemployed status. We also found considerable evidence of 'buck passing' when we asked for further explanation.

5. Research leads to findings. Some findings can be presented numerically. Other findings need to be expressed more lengthily. All findings need interpretation. Facts do not 'speak for themselves'. Judgements always have to be made and well argued.

Typical conversations went as follows:

Landlords

'I have my own bills to pay and it's important that I get the rent in on the due date to meet them.'

'If the DSS would pay quicker, there wouldn't be a problem – I suppose.'

Newspapers

'The adverts are not discriminatory. We do not print things like, no whites, no blacks, no women, no men, etc. because that would be. We merely allow advertisers to state their individual broad preference.'

'An explanation of the phrase 'No DSS' would increase the cost of the advert.'

'So, what is the explanation?' 'You'll have to ask the landlords.' See 'Landlords' above.

Our conclusions were that landlords were actively discriminating against unemployed people. The process of handling Housing Benefit encouraged this.

Housing Benefit should be handled more swiftly and the ability of landlords to discriminate made illegal. More widely, unemployment and inadequate housing needs tackling.

DESIGNING A QUESTIONNAIRE

Designing a questionnaire is a challenging task. It can be useful doing it as a group so that you can all cast a critical eye over each possible question.

Tips:

- **before you start, be clear about what you are trying to find out**
- **decide whether you want to use closed or open-ended questions – the former is more likely to accompany a quantitative survey, the latter a qualitative one, e.g. how long have you been in this job (closed); what are your views on the hours you work ? (open)**
- **ensure you only ask one question at a time**
- **make sure questions are clear and unambiguous**
- **check that questions are not loaded, or biased or imply an answer, e.g. 'How much do you dislike being unemployed?'**
- **consider the ethical implications – can you really ask that? e.g. 'Has unemployment interfered with your sex life?'**
- **try the questions out on each other and then a sample group – are you getting enough information in the areas you want?**

[illegible]

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Conferences for beginners

> *The message of our conference was not just about unemployment. It was also about our own ability to co-operate collectively and deliver.*
> **David**

In June 1997, the Changing Directions Group held a conference attended by 80 people entitled **Unemployment – Still the Big Issue**. It was organised from beginning to end as a collective activity and responsibility and was praised for its originality, welcoming atmosphere and excellent organisation. Members of the group planned the day, shared the preparations, trained and ran the workshops, and after the event made contributions to the conference report. Several of the group also gave a half-hour lunch-time entertainment of both serious and humorous content. (See 'Using Humour').

RAISING THE IDEA

We had to begin by challenging preconceived ideas about conferences. When the idea was first mooted, it was greeted by complete silence. The ensuing discussion revealed people tend to think of conferences as 'grey men in grey suits' and have nothing to do with them. After a while the idea began to grow and became a possibility.

FIRST STEPS

TITLE

First you need a focus and title. We chose ours around what seemed to be the most urgent and pressing issues at the time. 'Unemployment – Still the Big Issue' became our title in protest at the view that unemployment had been resolved.

INFORMING YOURSELVES

The next step is generally to get yourself educated about the issues. We got hold of relevant books and articles. Several people managed to get to conferences in London and Brussels about unemployment. We invited speakers during the term to cover aspects of the issues in addition to running our own seminars.

AIMS

When you have some idea of what the issues are, you collectively need to decide what the aims of the conference are to be. We got people into small groups to discuss this, then used a plenary session and by the end of session a rough list was completed on the board. This was tidied up and produced by the following week for further discussion and eventually approval. Everyone then had a copy.

AIMS OF CONFERENCE

To challenge the idea that unemployment is becoming less important as a social problem.

To highlight how mass unemployment is a global problem – a major cause of poverty and social distress throughout the world.

To look critically at the religion of the 'free' market and show how it is devastating people's lives.

To argue for the importance of education and health services in economic development.

To discuss ways in which unemployment and poverty can be challenged by citizens and by governments.

TIMING

We began the planning of the Conference six months before it took place. A clear and strict timetable is important. Organisation is not neat and tidy but we did roughly this:

Months 1 and 2

Decided to go ahead, planned title and aims; began to educate ourselves about the issues; decided on speakers; wrote to book them; planned rough timetable for the day; considered our resources; decided what to charge (£25 waged; free unwaged); we decided to take an international approach and students developed presentations about groups we have connections with in Zimbabwe and through the European organisation for excluded groups, Cicero.

Months 3 and 4

We put out early publicity in the form of a general poster; we hadn't yet firmed up speaker details; we decided who to write to and collected names and addresses; contacting who we knew had address lists e.g. in adult education, the trades unions, political parties, community groups. Asked them if they wanted to run stalls.

Months 5 and 6

Finalised the programme; 2,000 printed; speakers agreed; decided who would do what jobs on the day, chairing session, reception etc.; arranged for ten of the group to run workshops; organised workshop training and how to chair a meeting; wrote material for lunchtime entertainment: Porridge and Berries group; invited local community theatre worker to help us with this; three members of group discussed together and with the wider group a keynote address they were giving; this was completed; training for presenting material and voice projection took place with whole group; lunches were booked.

The day before

We met to set up the hall and rooms the evening before; lists of conference delegates were ready at entrance; conference papers and sticky badges lined up.

The day

We all met early; registration set up; workshop pairs shown rooms – colour coded with delegates badges and coloured blobs; coffee available; speakers met with. We were fortunate in attracting an audience of around one hundred people including professionals in various fields, TEC representatives, students, political activists and unemployed people. The day went smoothly and well, and we all felt an enormous sense of achievement.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE BY PARTICIPANTS

GIVING THE CHANGING DIRECTIONS KEYNOTE SPEECHES

The lesson about adult life is all about overcoming fear. Getting over the fear of reading a speech is an achievement. It's all about meeting that challenge. I was thrown in at the deep end – my choice – and I'll take some useful skills with me. Les

It helped me achieve something I never thought I'd be able to do... standing up and speaking. It was what I wanted to do for a long time but never had a chance. The whole experience provided people with an idea of themselves that they probably didn't have before. Unemployment is so negative. It brought that aspect out. Their potential. Ermine

I got something out of being a member of a team with no competition. It's a good way to tackle apathy and there's a lot of apathy among the unemployed. Christine

The skills we covered are great for your C.V. Sal

WORKSHOPS – HOW I FELT

When first asked to help run a workshop, my first reaction was that I didn't want to do this, and felt that I didn't feel equipped to take it on. Having now done it, I am glad that I agreed to take part. Although it was a bit daunting at first during the workshop, but as the group developed I began to feel more confident, and the fact that I wasn't on my own helped to make it easier. When it came to reporting back, again I was nervous to begin with, but managed to overcome these feelings and make a reasonable first effort. Alan

AFTER THE BALL...

The purpose of the conference was to collect and disseminate ideas. We recorded conference proceedings in a report to which everyone contributed, interspersed with poems and prose from the lunch-time entertainment. We then sent this to people attending the Conference as well as politicians and trade union leaders.

Running a workshop

THE PURPOSE OF WORKSHOPS

- to gather views from a range of people concerned about a particular issue
- to discuss ideas generated by platform or workshop speakers
- to suggest possibilities for action
- to meet with people who experience shared problems or shared concerns.

ORGANISATION

The objectives to be achieved by a workshop will need to fit in with the overall aims of the event, e.g. conference.

One way of considering objectives is to say...' by the end of the workshop participants will have...' and then finish the sentence, e.g. will have discussed a specific question, considered ideas for action, etc.

You will need to decide what role workshops will play within the wider event. For instance some events run different workshops with informed speakers on different subjects. Others use workshop chairs as facilitators of a discussion around main conference themes.

Whether you undertake the former or latter, you will need to decide how the workshops will fit in to the timetable and purpose of the event. You will also need to decide what speakers to invite or what questions you want addressed.

More practically you will need to decide on the size of the workshops. This will either be directed by who wants to join what, or where they are all dealing with the same question, by how many you think manageable.

You will also need to consider who will chair the workshops and who will record and report them, and what training needs they might have.

CHAIRING A WORKSHOP

If you have a specialist speaker, chairs will need to:

- organise the seating
- find out how the speaker wishes to be introduced
- welcome participants
- get people introducing themselves to each other briefly
- explain the timing e.g. talk/questions
- keep an eye on the time
- ensure as many people as possible get a say
- find out how the speaker wants to handle questions
- wrap the session up
- thank the speaker

Where the chair is acting as facilitator, they will need to:

- organise the seating
- welcome participants
- get people introducing themselves to each other
- explain what questions are to be discussed and how much time will be allocated
- suggest basic ground rules e.g. everyone to have a say, no-one to speak for too long
- ensure tasks are accomplished including writing-up of points if necessary

Chairs can make their own contribution to the debates but they need to see this as secondary to the main task.

WRITING UP THE WORKSHOP

One person in each workshop will need to take some notes of what is being said. Very often points will be expected to be written up on flip-chart paper and brought to a plenary session.

- equip all workshop writers with a notepad and pen

- ensure flip-charts and thick pens are available

- as the discussion takes place, jot down the main points that are being said – don't attempt to write down everything; note disagreements and differences of view; if you're not sure of something, put a question mark and clarify it later

- work with the chair at the end to help the group identify the main points they want to take to the plenary; read back your notes to them and help them decide on priorities; put these points neatly on the flip-chart.

- someone (who can be different) will need to explain the points on the flip-chart to the main group.

- the workshop sheets need collecting at the end and can be used for writing the report.

LETS help each other

Local Economic Trading Systems (LETS) is an idea which goes back to social activist Robert Owen in the early 19th century. It was formalised in Canada in 1974 and then travelled to the UK.

There are currently over 350 registered LETS groups in the UK involving nearly 20,000 people.

LETS schemes operate their own 'currencies' with local names such as '*Readies*' '*Green pounds*' '*Anchors*'. The idea is to share work and resources without using actual cash. Individuals apply to join a local scheme. They offer what skills they have such as carpentry, gardening, baby-sitting. Lists are circulated. You are contacted by other members when your skills are needed. In return you receive credits in the local 'currency'. Most schemes keep computer records of transactions. LETS schemes value 'women's work' and child care – cooking, cleaning etc., earn good returns.

Two thirds of LETS members today are women, partly because women are less likely to be in work. They are also perhaps more tuned into networking and co-operative activities.

The advantages of LETS schemes are:

- breaking down of isolation
- valuing of skills, particularly those conventionally undervalued
- the creation of a co-operative set of values and the generation of community
- having your needs met when you have little or no money

EXAMPLES

One single mother of two was able to renovate her home without forking out cash. In return she baked and gardened for others in her own time.

One couple living on the poverty line found the use of a baby-sitter through LETS saved their relationship. The baby-sitter became a supportive surrogate granny to their child.
Everywoman May 1995

'Lets-link' is an organisation which can help you to join or set up a LETS scheme. They can be contacted at

Letslink U.K.,
2 Kent St.,
Portsmouth
PO1 3BS

Tel. 01705 730639

Send six second class stamps for details and contacts.

Contact Letslink to find the most local group to you and invite a speaker.

What do you know about trade unions?

QUIZ

Although Trade Unions have suffered a loss of power and funds in recent years, they remain, with 7 million members, the largest organisations of voluntary and democratic association. There are various ways Trade Unions have addressed the issue of mass unemployment, including offering cheap membership to redundant members, running Unemployment Centres and campaigning for Full Employment. You may consider there are more things they could do.

1. How many British trade unions exist today?

☐ 500 ☐ 250 ☐ 70

2. How many trade unions are affiliated to the Trades Union Congress?

☐ 500 ☐ 250 ☐ 70

3. How many unions have more than 100,000 members?

☐ 76 ☐ 43 ☐ 18

4. Which are the biggest unions today?

5. What percentage of workers are in trade unions today

☐ 80% ☐ 40% ☐ 30%

6. Can you name any unions which have more than 50% women members?

7. Women make up what proportion of membership today?

☐ 50% ☐ 30% ☐ 20%

8. How many women General Secretaries of unions are there (1998)?

9. Black workers are as likely to be in trade unions than white workers.

☐ True ☐ False

10. Can you think of three issues which trade unions are particularly concerned about today?

11. Can you identify three factors that have reduced trade union power in recent years?

12. Can you think of four services which trade unions offer members?

13. In what ways are trade unions helping the unemployed?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ANSWERS

1. There are 268 trade unions (1992) in existence. Many are very small such as the Sheffield Wool Shear Workers Union with sixteen members! In 1940 there were 1,000 unions, in 1979 there were 453 unions. Amalgamation has reduced the numbers recently. The ten biggest unions make up 60% of total membership. This is a much higher number of unions that other European countries have.

2. 69 unions are members of the Trade Union Congress established in 1869. The TUC has encouraged mergers to stop disputes over 'poaching' and to make unions stronger.

3. 18 unions have more than 100,000 members.

4. The biggest unions today are UNISON (formed recently from NALGO, NUPE and COHSE) with nearly 1.5 million members; the Transport and General Workers Union with 1 million; the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union with 880,000 and the General Municipal and Boilermakers Union with 799,000

5. 31% of people in work are in trade unions today. This compares with 57% in 1979, and 39% in 1989.

6. UNISON, Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (552,000 members), Royal College of Nursing (299,000 members), National Union of Teachers (213,656 members), all have more than 50% women

7. Women make up around 40% of trade union members today. Women in full-time work are just as likely to be in a union as men. Part-time workers are harder to unionise and only 20% are in unions.

8. In 1998 there were only 6 women General Secretaries. 10% of the 3,000 trade union full time officers are women.

9. Black workers are even more likely to be in trade unions than white workers. This is particularly so for West Indian workers where density is 45%. There are only around ten full-time black officials however. It was not till the 1980's that unions begin to take issues of racism and discrimination seriously.

10. A recent conference report entitled 'Campaigning for the Future' (TUC 1994) identified the following as pressing concerns... full employment, labour legislation, Europe – works councils and the Social Chapter, minimum wage/ basic income, global solidarity, racism, relevance of unions to young people, full-time rights for part-time workers. Unions such as UNISON with a large women's membership are also campaigning around better women's representation within the union and workplace, sexual harassment, child care and pensions.

11. Union membership has fallen from a peak in 1979 of around 13.5 million to 7 million today. Causes of this are high rates of unemployment especially in traditional strongholds of trade unionism. Deregulation, privatisation and casualisation have also reduced union membership and authority. The Conservative government passed four Employment acts since 1979, designed to reduce union power. Under attack have been secondary picketing, picketing, the closed shop, check-in i.e. having dues taken straight from your wages. Unemployment has also weakened unions because of the fear it creates amongst those still in work about their job security.

12. Unions don't just go on strike! In fact strikes today are relatively rare. Their main job remains to get the best deal for their members in terms of pay and conditions through collective bargaining. It is also to fight to defend jobs. In addition they provide financial services to members, educational services (e.g. UNISON's Return to Learn programme), legal services, pension services, support for individuals in dispute with employers, and often a range of deals and discounts. Manufacturing Science and Finance Union (MSF) extends membership to voluntary workers.

13. Unions are doing several things to support the unemployed. They encourage members losing their jobs to retain membership at a low rate, though very few do. They fund nearly 200 unemployed centres throughout Britain. They also campaign for full employment and decent benefits for the unemployed. However, it would be fair to say that trade unions have only recently begun to give serious consideration to changing patterns of work and the implications.

Useful Sources:

Trade Unions in Britain Today. John McIlroy 2nd Edition (1995) M.U.P.

Labour Market Trends, June 1997

Trade unions and the challenge to unemployment

The following is an extract from a talk by John Edmonds, General Secretary of the General Municipal and Boilermakers' Union. This union includes many general and low paid workers. The talk was given as part of the debate about the Labour Party's intention to rewrite clause four of its constitution. More broadly it outlines the views of the GMB about the continuing importance of full employment as a policy aim.

GMB general secretary John Edmonds says what he'd like to see next week in Labour's new Clause Four

Full employment gives meaning to our other aims. Full employment gives an incentive to employers to develop the talent of their workforce. Relieved of the fear of unemployment, working people can insist on civilised standards in the workplace.

Empowering our citizens means giving people legal rights in the workplace. That is why everyone at work should have the right to representation and the right for their union to be recognised. We support the minimum wage. We commit ourselves to a fair distribution of wealth and power. That means that we deplore the obscene gap between the salaries of the bosses of privatised utilities and the pay of hospital doctors.

What would transform our society, increase our happiness, reduce our fear and bring us back to a sense of community? We all want a fully employed society. We all want a chance to build better lives, secure in the expectation of regular income.

Full employment is the objective that bridges the gap between the long-standing ideals of the labour movement and the day-to-day demands of the British people. If we put full employment into our statement of aims no one will argue that we have taken a backwards step from our historic principles.

*This article is based on a talk to a GMB members' Clause Four consultation meeting

New Statesman, March 1995

John Edmonds identifies the following benefits of full employment:

FULL EMPLOYMENT

COMMUNITY
people won't be so afraid about losing their jobs and would be more supportive of each other

SECURITY
unemployment would cease to alienate large sections of the community

DEVELOPMENT OF TALENT
employers would need to invest in training

EMPOWERMENT
without the fear of unemployment, workers would press for legal workplace rights through their unions

ANTI-POVERTY
full employment would add to pressure for a minimum wage and in itself be the best anti-poverty measure

DEMOCRACY
a return to representative democracy and a removal of public utilities from private ownership should connect to a full employment strategy which gives everyone more say in their individual and collective lives

DISCUSSION

1. If you were an employer, what reservations might you have about John Edmonds' argument?
2. In what ways would Full Employment strengthen Trade Unions? What are your views on this?
3. Is Full Employment a desirable option but not a realistic one?

Trade unions internationally

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), based in Brussels, is the global organisation to which are affiliated more than one hundred member state Trade Union Confederations.

WHAT IT DOES

- **Campaigns for trade union and worker rights in member states**
- **Conducts 'whistle-blowing' campaigns, for instance on health and safety issues**
- **Exposes trade union violations in an annual survey**
- **Campaigns for the tripartite International Labour Organisation's Code of Labour Standards**

EXAMPLES

WHISTLE-BLOWING

In 1997 the ICFTU and Dutch trade unions publicised a survey which found that flower cutters in Colombia and Uganda, who mainly export to Europe, often worked without protection from pesticides including substances banned in Europe and the US which cause women miscarriages and premature births.

WORKERS' RIGHTS

The ICFTU campaigns on five core elements of the International Labour Organisation's Code of Labour Standards (UN-backed). These are (1) the right to join a trade union, (2) the right to collectively bargain, (3) the outlawing of forced or slave labour, (4) the ending of discrimination, (5) the abolition of child labour.

MONITORING TRADE UNION VIOLATIONS

The ICFTU discovered and publicised the following:

- In the US one in nine workers joining a trade union is fired.
- Mainly female workers in Mexico's maquiladora factories (cheap labour on the US border) face systematic abuse of trade union rights.
- In Russia attempts by unions to monitor the privatisation process often results in management reprisals.
- In the UK strikers are not legally protected against dismissal without compensation.

DISCUSSION

1. What objections do you think governments have to the implementation of the ILO's five Core Standards?
2. With increased global competition what sort of future faces trade unions internationally?
3. What can be done to strengthen the position of trade unions globally?

The first million jobs

In July 1995, the Full Employment Forum supported by many Trade Unions produced a document entitled 'The First One Million Jobs'. This document sets out to identify concretely ways in which government in consultation with Trades Unions and other relevant community organisations could create a substantial number of new jobs. The creation of new jobs would be part of an anti-poverty strategy that would narrow the increasing divide between those excluded from society and those experiencing the full benefits of a very wealthy economy. Below is a summary of its argument.

THE ARGUMENT

'Nothing has been more damaging to the social and economic fabric of this country than the return of mass unemployment.'
Towards full employment – 'The first Million Jobs'
Roger Berry, Michael Kitson and Jonathan Mitchie, Full Employment Forum (1995)

'The non-employment rate of men aged 25-55 has ... tripled in the UK, France and Germany since 1970s.'
Financial Times, 15th May 1992

'The Unemployment Unit says the true answer to the question 'How many people in Britain are unemployed?' is 'Britain needs 5.4 million jobs.'
Labour Research, January 1997

Unemployment and non-employment has huge social costs. Personal hardship and misery is enormous. Ill health and raised crime levels are costly to society. Unemployment causes relationships to break down, it breeds racism and social disintegration.

It is also financially costly. The cost to tax-payers of the loss of tax and benefits payments is £30 billion, or twice the expenditure on the NHS. As such it increases the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement (PSBR) or government debt. Resources are transferred to the better off who spend more on imports and cause an imbalance in the balance of payments. It increases the tax burden on those in work. It encourages casualisation of the workforce, and reduces incentives to invest in people's skills. It also creates a pessimistic environment in which people think that there is nothing that can be done.

CREATING A MILLION JOBS

'Mass unemployment is not an inevitable fact of modern life.'
Full Employment Forum

There are clearly many jobs that need doing. We can never compete as a low wages economy. We need to develop a domestic market that competes with more sophisticated markets. Current policies are actually decreasing the skills base.

It would cost £16 billion pounds to create a package of quality jobs in housing, health, education and training, personal social services, the environment and energy conservation.

£8 billion could be paid for by taking people off social security benefits. £6 billion is in banks from the sale of council houses of which £3 billion could be used for a housing programme leaving £3 billion. The other £5 billion could be raised either:–

- by creating a new 50% tax band for incomes over £50,000 (£2 billion)
- by raising corporation tax from 33% to 36% (£2 billion)
- increased borrowing;

even £3 billion would have no effect on interest rates

'However one analyses the situation there are numerous ways in which jobs could be created consistent with the objectives of increasing investment and meeting social need. The costs would be modest and easily financed. All that is required is the political will.'
Berry, Kitson, Mitchie (1995)

A strategy for full employment should have two main components.

MANUFACTURING AND SERVICES

(1) Investment in services and manufacturing with which Britain can trade so that exports can grow and economic growth can be achieved. We need to reduce the amount we import which has exceeded exports since 1983.

SOCIAL SERVICES

(2) Increasing the tradeable sector will not do much to increase jobs since these sectors need to be more technologically developed to be competitive. Therefore job growth must be in the non-tradeable sector. There are many unmet social needs in society where work can be done and jobs generated. The following are areas where there are particular needs and many jobs could be created.

Housing: More than 100,000 new homes need to be built each year. In addition 3 million homes need urgent repairs. Poor housing causes ill health which adds burdens to the NHS.

Education and Training: In order to develop the skills base more money needs to be invested in education and training. 80% of the workforce of the year 2000 are already in work and only 33% are qualified to the equivalent of National Vocational Qualification Level 3 or GCSE (McGivney, 1994). By European standards this is very low. Those who need most education and training are those who have had least. Nursery school education would give more children a better start educationally. Its expansion would also create more jobs.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Health: Staffing in the health services is increasingly stretched and there are growing needs, not least from a greater elderly population. Many jobs could be created in these services.

Personal social services / care in the community: Increasing numbers of people are finding their care needs in the community are not being met. Elderly people and people needing community psychiatric care are going untended unless they can pay for services. Providing real care for people in their communities would generate many jobs for care workers and home helps.

Environmental Projects: Many projects could be generated in the areas of energy conservation, environmental enhancement and clean-up activities.

In addition to the above, jobs could be created which would make linkages between these various activities.

DISCUSSION

1. How desirable do you consider these proposals to be?
2. How feasible do you consider these proposals to be?
3. In what ways could trade unions campaign for these ideas? In what ways (if any) could they link up with the unemployed in doing so?
4. What changes would occur in society if one million jobs were created?

Popular struggles

Ordinary people have not accepted social exclusion without challenge. Below are some examples of struggles:

- The Social Democratic Federation recruited unemployed people and agitated on their behalf during the 1880s-1900s, winning concessions in the form of relief and relief works.

- Trade Union pressure encouraged the beginnings of a National Insurance Scheme in 1911.

- The National Unemployed Workers Movement was formed by unemployed people in 1920 and campaigned till the 1940s. It won increases in benefits in the 1920s and organised hunger marches in the 1930s.

- 1981 and 1983 saw two People's Marches for Jobs initiated by the North West Region of the TUC.

- In 1977 the Newcastle Trades Council established an Unemployed Centre which actively campaigned against redundancies on Tyneside. By 1983 there were 200 centres supported by the TUC.

- In the late 1970s Lucas Aerospace shop stewards organising workers facing cuts in the arms budget drew up schemes for 150 alternative socially useful products including kidney machines, wind generators and non-polluting engines.

- The late 1970s also saw the growth of the Claimants' Unions. These Unions believe in a guaranteed minimum income for all and advise claimants, fight on their behalf and organise political education and activities.

- In 1984-5 the government took on the NUM as miners and their wives struggled against programmes of pit closures.

- The Poll Tax introduced in Scotland in April 1989 and England in April 1990 led to mass agitation around the slogan 'Can't Pay, Won't Pay'. After the demonstration and riot of March 1991 it was replaced.

- There has been considerable agitation around the Criminal Justice Acts of 1991/1993 and 1994 which attack the means by which many people, especially youth, are dealing with unemployment, by travelling or squatting.

- In May 1997 several hundred unemployed people met at a conference in Brussels to protest about unemployment in Europe.

DISCUSSION

1. Can you think of any more examples of struggles by people to protect rights and jobs?

2. Are there any special difficulties in organising the unemployed?

3. What struggles against social exclusion can you identify going on at the moment both in Britain and internationally?

Challenging poverty? A minimum wage

Britain has only recently accepted a minimum wage (June 1998). In 1993 the last of the Wages Councils were abolished. Established in the early part of the century, these regulated pay in low paid sectors of the economy. Low pay is most likely to occur in small firms (under 25 employees) in hotels, textiles, catering, distribution, home-working and cleaning. It affects more women than men and disproportionately more black people.

The establishment of a minimum wage set at a decent level would help reduce poverty for those in work if wider issues of the poverty trap are also addressed, including women's needs for adequate child-care. It would also make the arguments stronger for higher levels of benefit for those who cannot find work. The philosophy underpinning these arguments is about including all members of society and it rejects the idea that those in poverty or out of work are often there because of deficiencies on their part rather than on the part of society.

A MINIMUM WAGE IN DENMARK

In Denmark the minimum wage is a major trade union preoccupation. In a country where 80% of workers are in Trade Unions, the increase in the minimum wage is secured by collective bargaining and supplemented by industry based agreements. It stands at around 70% of average earnings and unemployment benefits are tied closely to it. In this way those outside the labour force do not suffer from poverty and exclusion.

(TUC Conference - Minimum wage 6th July1995)

WHAT IS A MINIMUM WAGE?

This depends how you define it. An increasingly popular measure is to take an hourly rate based on median average male and female earnings. A median average means the point on the earnings scale where half earn more and half earn less.

WHO WOULD A MINIMUM WAGE AFFECT?

Have a look at the table below

- Which workers would benefit most from a minimum wage – full-time or part-time?
- How would a minimum wage affect full-time female manual workers?
- What difference would the rates of £3.40 or £4.00 make at 1994 prices?

Proportion of Employees with Hourly Earnings Below Given Levels.

Category of Employee	Below 340p	Below 400p
FULL-TIME		
Manual Men	3.5%	10.0%
Non-Manual Men	1.5%	3.7%
Manual Women	20.7%	42.9%
Non-Manual Women	3.4%	9.2%
PART-TIME		
Men	24.6%	42.6%
Women	21.8%	42.3%

(Source. 1994 NES. Table A20. The data relate to adult rated employees for whom hourly earnings were calculated). John Hughes (1994)

The Directors of Tesco earn more than £4 a minute!
Labour Research, July 1997

- The Labour government has set a minimum wage of £3.20 – and less for young people. What are your views on this?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WHY HAVE PRESSURES TOWARDS ADOPTING A MINIMUM WAGE INCREASED?

- part-time work has increased – there are now around 6 million part-time workers in Britain (in Europe there are only 15 million altogether!) and 15 million full-time workers.

- taxpayers are subsidising employers' low pay through Family Credit to the extent of £1 billion a year.

- wage rates in many industries (e.g. hotels and catering) and for young people are going down especially after the abolition of the Wages Councils.

- Trade Union collective bargaining cannot reach these groups and Trade Unions recognise they must campaign for a better deal for their part-time workers and full-time female manual workers.

'When wages councils were abolished, increases in employment predicted by the (Conservative) government did not materialise.
Labour Research,
May 1997

ARGUMENTS AGAINST A MINIMUM WAGE

- it would create unemployment
- it would create inflation by increasing consumer power and encouraging workers above the minimum to demand pay rises
- it would make British industry less competitive
- it would strengthen the power of trade unions

ARGUMENTS FOR A MINIMUM WAGE

- 9 million employees in Britain earn below the European decency level (68% of male and female average earnings).
- low pay is a subsidy to employers paid by taxpayers.
- low pay is not encouraging more employment, especially amongst youth.
- a minimum wage would improve child poverty at a time when 1 in 4 children is raised in poverty.
- better pay would force employers to think more rationally and efficiently about their use of labour; it would also encourage them to train and retain workers.
- a minimum wage would particularly benefit women.
- it would lift 300,000 (if £4) out of benefit dependency and boost tax revenues.

A WIDER STRATEGY

As part of an anti-poverty strategy a minimum wage would not be sufficient because many would still be left in the poverty trap. This would be particularly true if the minimum wage is set at a low rate.

The TUC found that £3bn a year of tax-payers' money – £120 each – was subsidising low pay. Between 1990 and 1995 claims for Family Credit doubled.
Labour Research,
July 1997

What is also needed is:–

- reduced taxes for the low paid

- reduction of steep National Insurance tapers and benefit cut-off points as earnings rise to reduce the poverty trap

- pressures on employers to increase spending on training particularly for those who need it the most

- adequate child-care for people wanting to work

- equality for part-time workers.

ACTIVITY

Divide into two groups. One group should present the case for a minimum wage. The other group should present the case against. Put the different cases on a flip-chart. Then have a general discussion.

What is to be done?

The following are different packages of ideas about how the future should be tackled.

Can you identify the political positions behind these?

- people are lazy, and self-interested and need incentives to work
- the involvement of the state in welfare should be reduced
- employers should be able to operate freely without constraints
- people must make provision for themselves and their families

- people need support at difficult stages of their lives
- the welfare state should encourage and not coerce people back to work
- more education and training is essential
- the state should provide the infrastructure for industry

- international corporations need controlling by inter-state organisations
- trades unions need to internationally advance the interests of workers
- a social wage (services such as health), minimum wage and decency income should exist for all
- governments need to actively create jobs
- alternatives to work should be developed and given status

- child care facilities are needed
- the distinction between full-time and part-time work should be abolished
- discrimination on the basis of race and gender needs challenging more seriously

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

You might like to ask of these

1. Who would benefit or lose from such changes?

2. Who has the power and how is it being challenged?

3. How would you pay for these changes?

4. What will happen without these changes?

WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

REFERENCES

Benson, Richard, (1997), Young Soul Rebels, *The Guardian* 15.12.97

Berry, R. Kitson, M. & Mitchie, J. (1995), *The First Million Jobs*, Full Employment Forum

Brecht, B. (1970), 'Praise of Learning', in Ed. Alan Bold, *Penguin Book of Socialist Verse.*

Dickson, A. (1982), *A woman in your own right – assertiveness and you*

Edmund,J. (1995), 'What the workers want', *New Statesman & Society* 10/3/95

Equal Opportunities Commission (1994), *Some facts about women*

Everywoman (April 1994), 'The loneliness of the lone woman'

Hughes, J. (1994), *Realities of a minimum wage*, Trade Union Research Unit, Ruskin College

Hughes, K. and Sherry, T. (1997), 'Doing it Together', *Adults Learning*, NIACE, November 1997

ICFTU (1997), *Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights*

Labour Research March (1993), *Sponsoring women from Westminster*

Labour Research March (1992), *Labour's boost for women*

Labour Research (Oct 1994), *Young workers poverty pay*

Labour Research (Jan 1997), Various articles

Low Pay Unit (1994), *Minimum Wage*, European Labour Forum, winter 1994

McGivney, V (1994), *Wasted potential: training and career progression for part-time and temporary workers*, NIACE

Richardson & Robinson (1993), *Introduction to Women's Studies*

Social Trends (1995)

Tolson, A. (1977), *The limits of masculinity*, Penguin

TUC (1995), *Arguments for a minimum wage*, Conference and publication 6/7/95

TUC (1997), List of Affiliated Trade Unions

Unemployment – Still the Big Issue (1997), *Conference Report*, available from Ruskin College, Oxford

USDAW (1994), *Low paid workers*

Weale, S. (1995), Work ethic stunts growth of New Man, *The Guardian* 17/6/95

Wells, J. (1995), 'Unemployment & Crime', in Ed. K. Coates, *The right to work*, Spokesman

Zero tolerance, *Campaign pack*

USEFUL ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

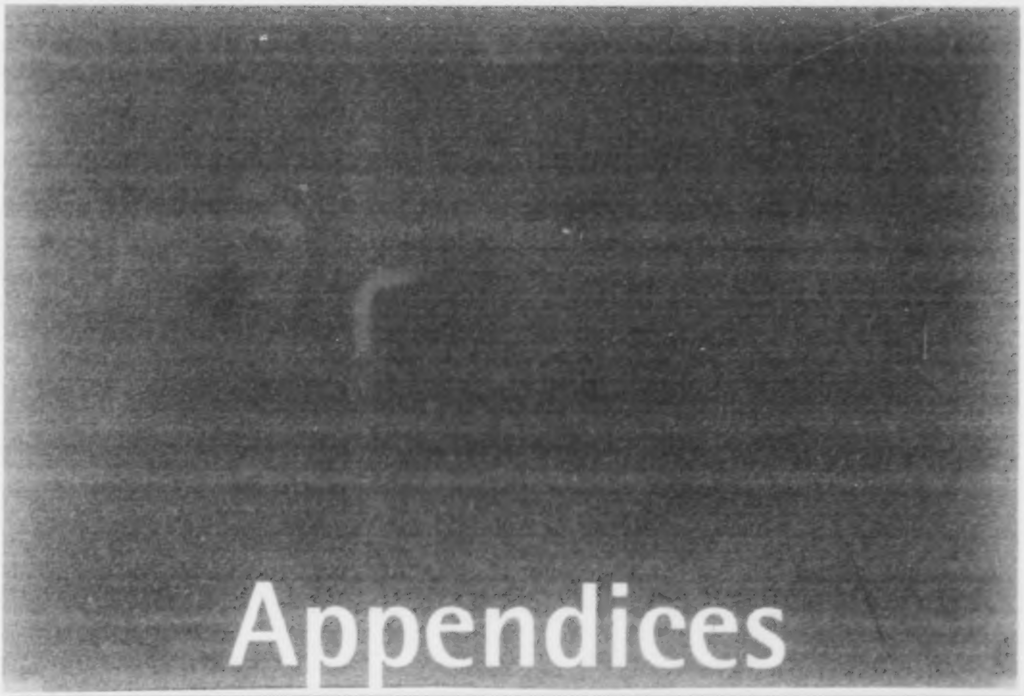
NCVO Publications, *The Voluntary Agencies Directory*

Low Pay Unit in *Labour Forum*, Winter 1994

Realities of a minimum wage, Trade Union Research Unit, John Hughes. Ruskin College, 1994

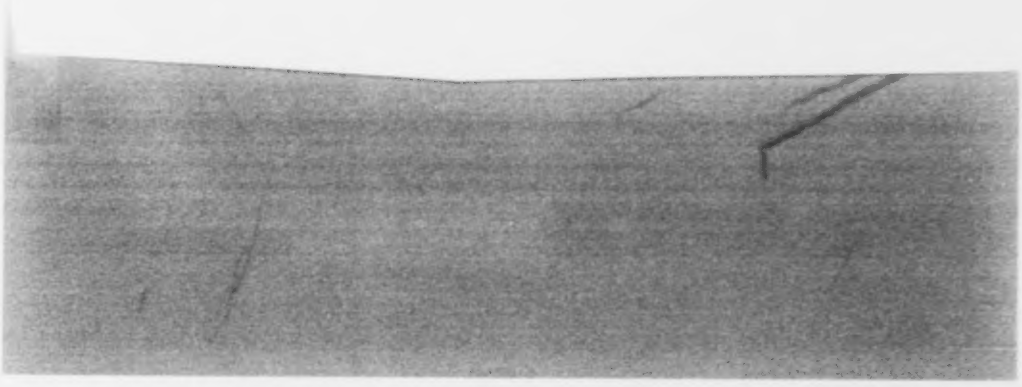
Arguments for a minimum wage, TUC, 1995

The Voluntary Agencies Directory, NCVO Publications



Appendices

Finding the jobs 164 *Application forms* 165
Preparing for interviews 166 *Training, re-training and education* 167
Paying for education and training 168 *Sources of information* 168
Twenty alternative ways of spending your time usefully 169
Changing Directions - an explanation of the course 170
Programme example 171 *What I get out of Changing Directions* 172
Useful addresses 173



Finding the jobs

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES?

There are a number of reference sources you can use which give specific career/job information. These are listed in the 'sources of information' towards the end of this chapter under 'on specific careers'.

- **'Occupations'**, for example, will tell you about the job and what it involves; what personal characteristics are needed; traditional entry qualifications and possibility for late (mature) entry; an idea of pay and conditions; an indication of demand for the work; possible progression and related jobs or occupation. (Occupations will be found in local careers libraries and T.E.C. resources.)

- Another thing to do is keep an eye on the vacancies at your local job centre or in the local press.

- The job centre would be able to give you some information immediately.

- Next to reading about the job in one of the reference books, by far the best thing to do is to look in the local or national papers. If you see something you like the sound of, send off for the details. There are a few advantages in this method:
  - you get an application form to practise on
  - you get a list of skills and qualifications asked for by a real live employer, not by a textbook
  - you get the opportunity to look at up-to-date job descriptions and person specifications
  - with up-to-date information you can better marry up your skills to the requirements
  - you should be able to identify any glaring weaknesses in your skills.

WHERE TO LOOK FOR JOBS, WHERE ARE THE VACANCIES?

- With firms – many positions do not get advertised. They get filled by someone who knows someone who knows someone. And it is not all done by the old school tie brigade. So build yourself a network of contacts. Use families, friends and word of mouth.
- Careers Service and Job Centre
- Local and national press recruitment advertising, specialist periodicals
- Employment agencies
- Local Market Information Service can give forecasts on labour market needs (Job Centre/TECs/Recruitment Agencies)
- Use libraries, directories and Yellow Pages which all provide information on local industry.
- Directory of voluntary organisations
- Local environmental group
- Your home – are any of your skills useful to others, could you set up on your own? Gardening, cooking, carpentry – or doing work from home.

Application forms

The information asked for on application forms is the same as the headings on a chronological CV. On some forms you may be asked to respond to questions which aim to highlight your transferable skills and to demonstrate the application of your qualifications and skills.

Examples of these are:

- Provide examples of where you have worked as part of a team. What was your role or contribution?
- Please give details of special achievements and/or positions of responsibility.
- Outline any activities you have planned and organised and how you achieved your results.
- Please indicate why you are interested in this post, the reasons why you consider yourself suitable and how you see your future with this company/organisation.

These examples of questions are another way of getting the information which is usually found in a personal statement.

PERSONAL STATEMENTS

A personal statement usually goes on the blank page at the back of the application form. It's the piece of writing you do in response to 'why do you want this job/to do this course?'; 'what skills, abilities and experience do you have which are relevant to this application?'; 'what makes you the best person?'

In some cases you may not be completing an application form but will be submitting a CV with a covering letter, i.e. your personal statement.

- A personal statement is an opportunity for you to explain your motivation and suitability for a job or course. In it you can tailor relevant aspects of your experience to the details of the post or course, offering evidence of your suitability and enthusiasm.
- You will need to pay close attention to any information or criteria laid out for you and clarify what it is that is wanted.
- In applications to trainers or educational establishments you would respond to the course entrance requirements detailed in the literature. That may be a bit more difficult on a UCAS (University Clearing System) form because you may be applying for different courses in different areas.
- If you apply for a job you should be given a job description and person specification.

A **job description** should:

- give the job title and title of the person who will be your boss
- describe how the job fits in the organisation
- give the post grade, if relevant, and the section you will work in
- outline the purpose of the job

A **person specification** is an attempt to identify the ideal person for the job. An employer describes:

- the background the person should have
- type and level of qualification needed to do the job
- level of fitness required
- previous experience needed to fulfil the job
- the temperament which the job requires.

Usually selection criteria are listed as ESSENTIAL or DESIRABLE. For example:

- ESSENTIAL – must have CSE English and Maths
- DESIRABLE – preference will be given to candidates with GCSE
- ESSENTIAL – candidates must have six months' experience
- DESIRABLE – applicants should have good telephone skills

RESPONDING TO THE PERSON SPECIFICATION

You will need to respond to each and every one of those points. Address each point in turn, offering details of direct or indirect but relevant experience. In addition to this give a brief explanation, at the beginning, of why you are applying for this job/course at this point in time. Indicate your enthusiasm and do not be too modest. Without going over the top show them just how good you are. At the end say a bit about your wider interests and concerns. This helps paint the picture of you as a character.

PRACTISE!

You may need to have a few attempts at your personal statement. If possible use a word processor so you can go back easily to amend for other applications. Get someone to look over it for you to check for mistakes but also to see how it reads.

As mentioned earlier, send off for details of jobs that interest you: then you can have some practice at writing in response to job descriptions and person specifications.

Preparing for interviews

WHAT IS AN INTERVIEW?

An interview is a chance for an employer or course tutor to get to know more about you and to assess whether you have the necessary qualities to undertake the job or course of study. And remember interviews are a two-way process so it is also an opportunity for you to find out more. You may wish to assess whether the organisation or college has the necessary qualities you are looking for!

INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

DO

- check the time and date of the interview and confirm that you will be attending
- check your travel arrangements. If possible do a 'dummy run' so you know exactly where you are going and how long it will take to travel there
- find out as much as possible about the organisation
- collect together all the documents you may need e.g. copy of application, CV, job description and person specification
- decide what you are going to wear. Your clothes need not be expensive but they must be clean and ironed
- ask who will be interviewing you and what format the interview will take – know what to expect in advance.
- write down any questions you have – it is perfectly acceptable to refer to your notes in the interview, providing you alert the interviewers to what you are doing
- have a practice – perhaps a friend, member of the family or tutor could be asked to help

ASKING THE QUESTIONS

Some ideas on questions.

You may be asked:

- your reasons for applying
- what qualities do you think you have to offer
- about information given in your application form about previous experience
- where you see yourself in 12 months' time/your future plans
- whether you have any questions

Don't be afraid to say you didn't hear a part of a question or that you didn't understand. The interviewer wants the interview to go well too.

You may ask:

- what training will I be given
- what books/materials will I need
- what opportunity will there be to gain further qualifications
- what are the hours of work/study
- when may I expect a decision

MAKE A GOOD IMPRESSION

- **if you need to go through a closed door knock first**
- **do not smoke or chew**
- **listen**
- **sit comfortably but don't slouch – remember body language**
- **try not to fiddle with anything**
- **smile and make eye contact with the interviewers**

If you get very nervous before interviews, despite all the preparation, consider a natural calming remedy, learning meditation and relaxation techniques or breathing exercises.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

You should not be asked any greatly irrelevant questions as interviewers should be aware of equal opportunities and will have decided on questions beforehand based on the job description and person specification. You should also not be asked about things like childcare arrangements.

ACTIVITY

Bring in applications or send for details of a course or job you may be interested in. From the information, job description and person specification work out in pairs the sort of questions the interviewers might ask. You may even want to try mock interviews.

Training, re-training and education

LOCAL ADULT EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

There are various organisations that provide adult education and training opportunities in local areas. The phone book or library are immediate sources of their addresses and telephone numbers.

JOB CENTRE AND TEC

For training opportunities contact your local Job Centre or Training and Enterprise Council (TEC). Both will have up-to-date information on Training for Work programmes and work experience opportunities. These may not be ideal but they do offer training and a recognised qualification. You will also be supplied with any specialist equipment, books or clothing you might need e.g. chef's knives and whites. More importantly perhaps is the current work experience it will give, not to mention the possibility of a good reference. Training for Work also allows you to continue to receive any benefit without incurring a penalty.

WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION (WEA)

Founded in 1903, the WEA has been providing a wide range of courses for adults – some of which are aimed specifically at working class adults who may have had a previously negative experience of education. Courses often offer some remission of fees or concessions to students in receipt of benefit or on low income.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Often seen as offering leisure activity classes, e.g. flower-arranging! But in fact Community Education usually offers a range of non-vocational courses and increasingly offers vocational courses. There is often provision of Access courses too. Most Community Education providers offer some remission of fees. Brochures will be available locally in libraries, community centres and meeting places and at the Community Education offices.

UNIVERSITIES

Most universities offer part-time degree programmes. Some offer those free to unemployed people and people who are 60 or over .

EXTRA-MURAL DEPARTMENTS OR CONTINUING EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

If you have a university near you they may offer a range of academic and special interest courses. These are usually for local adults and are not necessarily associated with degree programmes. You should ask about concessions.

COLLEGES OF FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Most, if not all, welcome adult students. They usually offer a range of vocational and non-vocational provision. All levels of ability should find a course to suit. From adult literacy and numeracy, to English as a second language, to the competence-based National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) to GNVQ and A levels to degree. Again many colleges offer remission of fees. Those courses which lead to a recognised qualification e.g. City and Guilds, NVQ, GNVQ, BTEC, may have up to 100% remission of fees. Information would be in college prospectuses.

OPEN UNIVERSITY

The Open University still has an image of isolated study in front of a TV set. This is far from true. The Open University is a wonderful varied experience and a good way of meeting new people. Foundation courses include weekly tutorials and higher level courses include tutorials and study circles. The OU has a range of other courses on offer too. Your regional centre will be in the phone book. Fees can work out quite expensive but there is some funding provision available to help with fees in certain cases. It would be worth asking.

TELEVISION AND RADIO

There is a huge variety available on TV and radio now. Much of it is special interest but regular courses of study are broadcast e.g. The Learning Zone on BBC2. And this is free – if you don't count the cost of the TV and the licence!

For more general information use some of the suggestions in 'sources of information' located towards the end of the chapter.

Paying for education or training

Financing training or study may be difficult, particularly if you are unwaged or on a low income. The following are some ideas of possible sources of help and advice:–

- consult adult guidance advisers – they should have information on what you might be entitled to (e.g. grants) or will be able to provide you with a contact name and telephone number.
- ask the provider of the course or training you are interested in
- contact the awards section of your local authority
- consult the Educational Grants Directory and other grants directories (available in main libraries/careers offices/TECs)
- if you are in receipt of benefit you may be able to claim up to 100% reduction in fees at colleges, community education centres and other providers of education and training. So always check if there are any concessions available.
- identify what local access to education provision there is – many courses are free and you may be able to apply to an access fund for money to help towards the cost of non-access courses.
- Government training programmes – contact your local Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) and Job Centres.
- sponsorship (by an employer/organisation/local community group)
- if you have a disability you may be entitled to extra financial support – contact the Disability Employment Adviser at your local Job Centre.

ON BENEFIT?

N.B. One area of concern may be the issue of whether or not you may study or train whilst in receipt of benefit. The interpretation of the rules can vary from area to area. So if you would like to check out your particular situation you could use the Benefits Agency freephone helpline (in the telephone directory under Benefits Agency). This service is free and your enquiry will be kept confidential. *It does not go through to your local office.* You could also contact your local Claimants' Union.

Sources of information

FROM PEOPLE

- family – do you know what they do? (as distinct from knowing where they work)
- friends and neighbours – can be a good source of information and contacts
- people doing the work you are interested in – ask about it – many people are very happy to talk about what they do
- guidance workers
- Job Centre staff
- personnel staff

FROM PRINTED MATERIALS

These could be available in public libraries, careers office libraries, Training and Enterprise Council Resources Centres, Community Education Centres.

ON SPECIFIC CAREERS

- Signposts Box – a box of cards each describing a different job, but grouped into broad categories – as your Careers Service
- Occupations, published each year by COIC, it provides information on a wide range of careers and specifically mentions late entry – ask your Careers Service or Library

ON CAREER CHOICE AND LIFE PLANNING

- *Build Your Own Rainbow.* A workbook for career and life management by B. Hopson and M. Scally, Life Skills Communications
- *Working it Out* A self-help book to aid decision making, published by COIC
- *How to… Start a New Career* J. Johnston How To Books
- *Changing Course*, Maggie Smith, Life Skills Communications

ON JOB SEEKING

- *How to... Get That Job*, John Fletcher, How To Books
- *How to... Pass That Interview*, J. Johnston, How To Books
- *Where to Find That Job*, Alan Bartlett, CRAC, lists publications to look in for specific types of vacancy
- *The Perfect CV and The Perfect Interview* by Max Eggert, published by Century Business
- *How to Find the Perfect Job and The Perfect CV* by Tom Jackson, published by Piatkus. Useful for people who already have a high degree of qualifications and/or skills.

ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- *Second Chances*, published each year by COIC. A guide to adult education and training opportunities
- Prospectuses from individual colleges
- Directory of Further Education, Directory of Higher Education, published by CRAC. These list all courses available in UK Colleges and Universities
- University and College Entrance, published by UCAS, lists degree and HND courses including likely offers plus information on Access students in some cases.
- Open Learning Directory, Pergamon Open Learning, lists 2000+ courses that can be studied by open or distance learning
- Training for Work information from Job Centres and Training and Enterprise Councils
- Local Directories of Education and Training Opportunities, check if there is one in your area

FROM COMPUTER SOFTWARE

There is a growing amount of careers information available to access via computer.

- ECCTIS provides information on courses in universities and colleges
- Adult Directions matches work related interests to job titles, as does
- COIC Career Builder

Twenty alternative ways of spending your time usefully

- Joining a pressure group and getting active.
- Teaching a skill you have to others
- Working on a help-line
- Start writing – join a local writing circle
- Get into local history – try your library – learn genealogy
- Help at a local school
- Join LETS
- Get involved in local community activities
- Get serious about a hobby – become the expert – share the knowledge
- Learn a new and different (for you) skill – paint, run, play an instrument, design
- Start a local magazine – get yourself trained in desktop publishing
- Take more interest in your children and their activities
- Take in a stray animal
- Find an overseas penpal and discover more about a country
- Learn to grow plants
- Use your TV more educationally – watch out for serious drama or cinema
- Start a study circle meeting weekly in each other's houses
- Take up cycling and join up with other cyclists
- Discover the pleasure of reading
- Join non-vocational courses – keep your mind active

Changing Directions

- a course for people who are unemployed or partly employed and with few or no formal qualifications

HISTORY

Changing Directions began in January 1993 at Ruskin College, Oxford. Its development was a response to the changing employment structures locally and rising unemployment.

AIMS

The course aims to develop people's confidence and creativity, to make more sense of current issues, especially as related to the changing labour market, to improve communication skills, and to help people assess their lives, particularly with regard to education and training. It also encourages collective activities and projects with the purpose of adding to debates the voice of people who are most vulnerable to unemployment and poverty.

WHO IS IT FOR?

The course is aimed at anyone who is unemployed or partially employed who wants to assess where they are at this stage of their lives and to move in a new direction. We advertise widely and also have a frequent presence in the local job centre where we meet people and talk to them about the course.

CURRICULUM

The course is wide-ranging, involving the various elements are that described in this pack. We include political and cultural issues, communication and study skills, literature, guidance and collective projects. We invite speakers where relevant, involve past and present participants and we make regular visits to local museums, galleries and other activities.

ACCREDITATION

Participants can acquire Open College Network qualifications by writing short projects or by producing other written work.

ORGANISATION

The course takes place on one day of the week and we run it for nine weeks termly. People can join the group at any stage because we realise the need to include them speedily before the anxiety about joining a course sets in. Two people run the course which brings different strengths and gives more opportunity for participants to be seen individually.

Each day includes three separate sessions – usually issues-related, communications or guidance and cultural. Course programmes are discussed with each group for the following term, drafted and then finally agreed.

RUNNING THE GROUP

Each term ground-rules are discussed, agreed and circulated. This ensures a safe and confidential environment in which people can get to know each other, discuss their experiences where relevant and tackle controversial issues. Sessions are as participative as possible with an emphasis on group work, activities and discussion. The confidence and support this rapidly builds means we quickly find participants are willing to read their writing, give short talks and take on responsibilities.

EVALUATION

We evaluate activities as we go along in an informal way through asking for feedback. Participants also evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the course collectively at the end. Collectively we all shape the programme for the following term based on the experiences of the previous few weeks.

Programme example

CHANGING DIRECTIONS – APRIL TO JUNE 1996

PROGRAMME

Wednesday 26th April	
10.00 - 11.30	Welcome to new people 'What is confidence and how can I get more of it?
12.00 - 1.00	Putting pen to paper!
1.00 - 2.00	Lunch
2.00 - 3.00	Conferences for beginners!
Wednesday May 3rd	
10.00 - 11.30	Roy Moore (Ruskin Economics Tutor) will speak on Unemployment in Europe
12.00 - 1.00	How to run a conference workshop
1.00 - 2.00	Lunch
2.00 - 3.00	What has Dylan Thomas got to do with getting people back to work?
Wednesday May 10th	
10. 00 - 11.30	Planning the Conference
12.00 - 1.00	Writing the conference report
1. 00 - 2.00	Lunch
2.00 - 3.00	Visit to gallery
Wednesday May 17th	Future of Work Conference
Wednesday 24th May	
10. 00 - 11.30	After the ball was over – what to do next.
12.00 - 1.00	Communication skills/research skills
1.00 - 2.00	Lunch
2.00 - 3.00	Creative Writing
Wednesday 31st May	HALF TERM
Wednesday 7th June	
10. 00 – 11.30	Chris Turley (ex Changing Directions) will talk about her work with Oxford Film and Video Makers and show some films…including our video
12.00 - 1.00	Communication skills/research skills
1.00 - 2.00	Lunch
2.00 - 3.00	Poetry for summer. Matt McGinn, Alan Edminston
Wednesday 14th June	
10.00 – 11.30	What next? A discussion with guidance worker Carol Lushington.
12.00 - 1.00	How to do a presentation
1.00 - 2.00	Lunch
2.00 – 3.00	Visit
Wednesday 21st June	
10.00 – 11.30	Group session: bring something of interest to talk about
12.00 - 1.00	Communication skills/research skills
1.00 - 2.00	Lunch
2.00 - 3.00	Creative writing – or a talk on fossils by Frank McCallum (student)
Wednesday 28th June	
10.00 – 11.30	Chris Kitch will talk about her life and how she gained a degree and much self-knowledge; she will also consider further work with us
12.00 - 1.00	Presentations
1.00 - 2.00	Lunch
2.00 – 3.00	Evaluation of course Running a summer group.

What I get out of Changing Directions

What participants say they get out of Changing Directions includes:

- meeting new people and breaking down isolation.
- having structured time.
- exploring issues around unemployment – realising it's not individuals but society that's causing the problems.
- developing communication and study skills.
- exploring new interests and possibilities.
- rethinking career, work and education.
- participating in collective projects, thereby having a voice in present debates.

The most important thing I get out of this course is a sense of not being on my own as an unemployed person. For me long-term unemployment in the past has meant boredom, aimless TV-watching and depression. This course has given me the opportunity to read, think, and be more positive about my future with like-minded people. I have been able to bounce ideas off them, gain knowledge and information about every aspect of the experience of unemployment. Being unemployed needn't mean being thrown on the scrap heap of society.
Alan

The night before I got to the first class, my doubts about coming were getting the better of me. I felt I had nothing to offer the group and my ideas might not be welcome. With shaking hands and my body a bag of nerves I enter the class. I was amazed that some of the newcomers felt like myself and the previous members went through the same as when I first started. After a few weeks I felt more at ease with the group and I felt my confidence was emerging a bit more. Whatever happens in the coming months I knew this was the best step I have made in a long time and by meeting new people, exchanging ideas it really has made me much more confident in myself and around other people. I'm now hoping to go on to full-time study.
Katherine

I enjoy Changing Directions because I get to meet other people who are unemployed and in a similar position to myself. I feel get an opportunity to improve my reading and writing. Improving your knowledge of current affairs, literature and writing broadens your mind and makes you a more interesting person. When you are unemployed you tend to look in on yourself and dwell on yourself more than anything else but this course gets you talking and mixing with others.
Michele

Useful addresses

Anti-Nazi League, P.O. Box 2566, London N4 2HG
Tel. 0171 924 0313
Anti-Racist Alliance, P.O. Box 188, London SW1A 0SE
Tel. 0171 278 6869
Arts Council of England, 14 Great Peter Street, London
SW1P 3NQ Tel. 0171 333 0100
Association of British Credit Unions, P.O. Box 135, Credit
Union Centre, High St., Skelmersdale WN8 8AP
Tel. 01695 3144
CAFOD, 2 Romero Close, Stockwell Road, London
SW9 9TY Tel. 0171 733 7900
CRE, Elliott House, 10/12 Shirland Road, London W9 2BT
Central Statistical Office, Government Offices, Great
George St., London SW1P 3AQ Tel. 0171 270 4627
Fax 0171 270 6019
Child Poverty Action Group, 94 White Lion Street, London
N1 9PF Tel. 0171 837 7979
Christian Aid, 35 Lower Marsh, London SE1 7RL
Tel. 0171 620 4444
Co-operative Party, 342 Hoe Street, London E17 9PX
Tel. 0181 520 3580
Development Education Association, 29-31 Cowper
Street, London EC2A 4AP Tel. 0171 490 8108
Equal Opportunities Commission, Overseas House, Quay
Street, Manchester M3 3HN Tel. 0161 833 9244
Ethical Consumer, 16 Nicholas St., Manchester M1 4EJ
European Commission, UK Office, 2 Storey's Gate, London
SW1P 38T Tel. 0171 973 1992
European Labour Forum, Bertrand Russell House, Gamble
Street, Nottingham NG7 4ET Tel. 0115 9784504
Federation of Worker Writers & Community Publishers,
23 Victoria Park Road, Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent
ST6 6DX
Full Employment Forum, c/o 4 Armand Close, Watford,
Herts. WD3 3SQ
Green Party, 10 Station Parade, Balham, London
SW12 9AZ Tel. 0181 673 0045
Guardian/Observer, 77 Farringdon Road, London
EC1M 3LX Tel. 0171 278 2332
ICFTU & ETUC, 37-41 Rue Montagne aud Herbes
Potageres, 1000 Brussels, Belgium
Tel. 32-2-217.80.85 Fax 32-2-218.84.15
Institute for African Alternatives, 23 Bevenden Street,
London N1 6BH Tel. 0171 251 1503
International Labour Organisation, Vincent House,
Vincent Square, London SW1P 2NB
Tel. 0171 828 6401 Fax 0171 233 5925
Labour Party, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P
4GT Tel. 0171 802 [illegible]000 Fax 0171 802 1234
e-mail labour-party@geo2.poptel.org.uk

Liberty, 21 Tabard Street, London SE1 4LA
Tel. 0171 403 3888
Low Pay Unit, 27-29 Amwell Street, London EC1N 1UR
Tel. 0171 713 7616
Mind, National Association for Mental Health, Granta
House, 15-19 Broadway, Stratford, London E15 4BQ
Tel. 0181 519 2122
NCOPF (National Council for One Parent Families),
255 Kentish Town Road, London NW5 1YA
Tel. 0171 267 1361
NHA (National Homeless Alliance),
5-15 Cromer Street, London WC1H 8LS
Tel. 0171 833 2071
OXFAM, Oxfam House, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford
OX2 7DZ Tel. 01865 311311
Shelter, 88 Old Street, London EC1V 9HU
Tel. 0171 253 0202
Social Democratic and Labour Party, Cranmore House,
611c Lisburn Road, Belfast BT9 7GT
Tel. 01232 668100
Spokesman Books, Bertrand Russell House, Gamble St.,
Nottingham NG7 4ET Tel. 01159 708318
Fax 01159 420433
Tradecraft, Kingsway, Gateshead NE11 0NE
Trades Union Congress, Congress House, Great Russell
Street, London. Tel. 0171 636 4030
Unemployment Unit, 322 St. John Street, London EC1V
4NT Tel. 0171 833 1222
Unions 95, 6 Cynthia Street, London N1 9JA
Tel. 0171 278 9944
United Nations Association, Room J, 3 Whitehall Court,
London SW1A 2EL Tel. 0171 930 2931
Workers' Educational Association, Temple House,
17 Victoria Park Square, London E2 9PB
Tel. 0181 983 1515
World Development Movement, 25 Beehive Place,
Brixton, London SW9 7QR Tel. 0171 737 6215

Permissions

We gratefully acknowlege permission to publish the following extracts in this publication:

Steve Bell: Every effort has been made to contact the individual via the publisher and we would be delighted to hear from him for the next print run

Robert Burns: Every effort has been made to contact the publisher and we would be delighted to hear from them for the next print run

From *Selected Poems* by Carol Ann Duffy, published by Penguin, 1994

With grateful thanks to *The Guardian* and *The Observer* for:
'Blacks stranded at back of jobs queue', 12/02/95
'Stress linked to contract jobs culture', 04/01/95
'Changing work patterns', 28/10/94

From *Selected Poems* by Tony Harrison, published by Penguin, 1984

Seamus Heaney: Every effort has been made to contact the individual via the publisher and we would be delighted to hear from him for the next print run

From *Literature Belongs To Everyone* by Vi Hughes and published by The Arts Council of England, 1991

From *The Adoption Papers* by Jackie Kay, published by Bloodaxe Books, 1991

From *Down and Out in London and Paris* by George Orwell, published by Penguin and with permission from A.M. Heath, 1957

Jan Penn: Every effort has been made to contact the publisher and we would be delighted to hear from them for the next print run

Jonathan Swift: Every effort has been made to contact the copyright holders and we would be delighted to hear from them for the next print run

From *Social Trends 1995*, published by the Central Statistical Office

Sojourner Truth: Every effort has been made to contact the publishers and we would be delighted to hear from them for the next print run

From *Border Country* by Raymond Williams, published by NIACE, 1992

Virginia Woolf: Every effort has been made to contact the publisher and we would be delighted to hear from them for the next print run